THE REASON OF Episcopall Inspection Asserted in a SERMON

At a VISITATION in *Cambridge.*

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THE REASON

REVERENDO

Admodum in Christo Patri, Doctissimoque Antistiti, ac Domino D.

PETRO

Episcopo Elienſi

Concionem Hanc

In Summæ Obſervantiæ Symbolum
Humillimè Dicat Dedicatque

J. T.

Imprimatur,

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A Visitation-Sermon.

Act. 15. ver. 36.

Paul said unto Barnabas, let us go again, and visit our Brethren in every City, in which we have preached the Word of the Lord, and see how they do.

THe sacred Oracles make a tender to our view of two kinds of Visitations. The first held by Men; *Samuel*, whose concerns were Ecclesiasticall, as well as Civil, did every Year visit in *Bethel* 1 Sam. 7. 16. *Gilgal* and *Mispeh*. *Jehoshaphat* in his 2 Chron. 17. 8. third year did commissionate the Priests and Levites to do the like in all the cities of *Judah*.

The second by God himself. We read of *the Time*, *the Year*, *the Day* of his Visitation. He being eminently delighted with order has formed the intellectual part of the sublunary world, like the Ark of *Noah*, into three Stories, Oeconomicall, Politicall, Ecclesiasticall. The tuition of them he has committed to men, and expects from them a prudent care to prevent a departure from the design and Jer. 8. 12. & 11. 23. Isa. 10. 3.

import of their primitive Institution. If they shall neglect an inspection into those irregularities, which menace divine order with dissolution; it is the usuall method of Heaven to appoint a Day of Visitation, and to manifest displeasure against the Community by some signall calamity. The connivance of Governours makes the exorbitances of private persons the sins of the Community; and though the punishment of particular men may be deferred to a future state: yet Communities having no resurrection in the world to come, may justly expect the fruits of their delinquency in this present life.

St *Paul* and *Barnabas* well understanding all this, and being jealous, lest some errours in their absence might be crept into the doctrine, and conversation of those Churches, which they had newly planted, for the pacifying the solicitude of their own minds, the conservation of Order, the prevention of divine displeasure, they resolve upon the Visitation recorded in the Text, ἐπισκεψώμεθα τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ἡμῶν. *Let us visit our Brethren.*

In the precedent Verses of the Chapter we have a description of the first Christian Council; in this of a most solemn Visitation. The Church being disquieted with a controversie raised by the believing *Jews*, the Apostles and Elders did assemble together at Jerusalem in order to the determining of it. Every one of them singly was a Star devoted by his office to lead men to Christ: but now being gathered together and condensed into a Council they become a most bright and glorious Constellation, every way prepared by the emanations of light to guide the Church in this obscure concernment. Their authority was so illustrious and commanding; that their decree was received, where the debate first began, with testimonies of universall joy and satisfaction. If any did retain their former sentiments; yet they were so pious and modest, as to keep them to themselves, and not to hazard the peace

of

of the Church by an imprudent publication.

After the Apostle had seen the good effects of the Council, he resolves upon this Visitation. Though St *Barnabas* differed from him in the election of an Assistant (ὁ Παῦλος ἐζήτει τὸ δίκαιον, ὁ Βαρναβᾶς τὸ φιλανθρωπον) yet he fully conspires in the thing. His motion was entertained without the least disgust. Oecum. in 15. c. Act.

Paul said unto Barnabas, let us go again, and visit our Brethren, in every city, where we have preached the Word of the Lord, and see how they do.

The Text divides it self into these parts.

1. The Visiters, St *Paul* and St *Barnabas*.
2. The action to be performed at the Visitation, an authoritative Inspection, ἐπισκεψώμεθα.
3. The persons to be visited, *the Brethren*.
4. The place, where the Visitation is to be held, *in every City, where we have preached the Word of the Lord*.
5. The end, and design of the Visitation, *to see how they do*.

1. The Visiters. While our blessed Lord had his residence upon the earth, he did not depolite the regiment of the Church in the hands of others, but kept it in his own; and therefore he is stiled *the Apostle Heb.* 3. 1. *and Bishop* 1 *Pet.* 2. 25. To this function he received his Consecration, when the Holy Ghost descended upon him. *Act.* 10. 38. The Twelve he chose to be Assistants to him in order to the gaining of Proselytes: but did not during his life set them upon their Thrones. Though this power was promised; yet the fruition was suspended till the παλιγγενεσία. And therefore after his resurrection amidst his preparations for his Ascension in his triumphall chariot, He conferred this most inestimable Gift. As the Father sent him: so he sent them. As he was anointed by the Spirit, and set Joh. 20. 21.

apart to his Apoſtolicall Office: ſo he breathed it upon them, and ſolemnly ordained them to a ſucceſſion. When the right of *Judas* was extinguiſht by an act of violence which he did to himſelf: and the place of St *James* made vacant by that which he received from *Herod*: *Matthias* by the ſpeciall deſignation of the Holy Ghoſt was appointed to ſucceed the firſt, St *Paul* and *Barnabas* the ſecond: Even as *Ephraim* and *Manaſſes* were ſubſtituted in the place of *Joſeph*. A power being veſted in theſe two to govern the Church, they could give themſelves no contentment, untill they had exerted it to her beſt advantage: And therefore a reſolution is taken up to make a ſolemn Viſitation. And *Paul ſaid unto Barnabas, &c.*

2. Here is the Action to be performed, ἐπισκεψώμεθα. The word imports a ſtrict view, a moſt diligent and ſolicitous ſcrutiny: ἐπὶ denotes the intention and vigour of the Action. They took an exact Survey. What they found to be enormous did not eſcape their condemnation. The Apoſtle in his journey was not without his ῥάβδον in his hand. What was diſcovered to be congruous to the rules of Chriſtian converſation, they did ἐπιστηρίζειν confirm and encourage. The Canon of the Council of *Jeruſalem* they delivered with patheticall exhortations to a ſubmiſſion. How potent and efficacious is divine and celeſtiall influence! He that before procured letters from the High Prieſt in order to the diſanimating thoſe which embraced the Faith of *Chriſt*, now carries about the letters of the Synod in order to their confirmation.

3. Here are the Perſons to be viſited, *our Brethren*. By whom we are to underſtand not onely the Laity, but the Elders, who challenge a principall intereſt in this relation, and are frequently repreſented in the new Teſtament under this Character. *Theſe were ordained in every Church*, Act. 14. 23. and now an Inſpection is to be made, whether their demeanour be ſutable to the import of their ſacred Function.

Function. At their Ordination the Apoſtles did not diveſt themſelves of their authority to govern in thoſe places. St *Paul* ſaies, *that the care of all the Churches was upon him.* They conveyed a power, as the Sun doth light, without being loſers by the communication. The Elders were ordained to be *Epiſcopi & Paſtores gregis*: but the Apoſtles remained to be *Epiſcopi gregis & paſtorum.* And therefore St *Paul* at his Viſitation at *Miletus* cites the Elders to make their appearance, and left his Apoſtolicall injunctions with them: and in his inſtructions to *Timothy*, how to demean himſelf in the Church of God, one branch of his advice is, not to receive an accuſation againſt an Elder without the teſtimony of two or three witneſſes: which plainly intimates a ſuperiority over them reſiding both in Himſelf and *Timothy*. Theſe with the Laity are the Perſons to be viſited. *Let us viſit our Brethren.*

2 Cor. 11, 28.

Acts 20. 17.

4 Here is the place, where the Viſitation is to be held, *In every city, where we have preached the Word of the Lord.*

In every City.

The plantation of the Church was firſt begun in Cities, inſomuch that the words Infidell and Pagan, that is, one inhabiting in a village, became Synonimous, or terms of the ſame ſignification. When the Diſciples were made fiſhers of men, they caſt their nets where there was the greateſt confluence and expectations of ſucceſs. When the converts were increaſed to ſuch a number, that one place had not capacity enough to entertain them, they were not like Bees, when they ſwarm, put into a hive, which had no dependance upon that from which they came. Though they worſhipped God in their apartments, yet they continued to be one and the ſame Society. The Unity of the Church was no more prejudiced by this diviſion into divers congregations, then the unity of Faith by the diviſion of the Bible into Chapters and Verſes. In the moſt eminent Cities, although there muſt neceſſarily be more Aſſemblies then

then one: yet we read of the Church in the singular number, as the Church at *Corinth*, the Church at *Antioch*, the Church at *Jerusalem*. All of them being imbodyed under the same Numericall Government, made but one Community. Elders were constituted to take the immediate care of them: yet what they did was onely in a subordination to, and dependance upon the Apostles; to whom the power of Ruling was so far appropriated, that nothing could be Authentick, and have the impress of Authority without their consent; and therefore notwithstanding the Presbyters in every City, St *Paul* and *Barnabas* did challenge to themselves the power of Visitation. This power did not extend to all Cities, but those onely, *where they had preached the Word of the Lord*. The Apostolicall jurisdiction was not exercised in every place, but confined to a certain precinct. Every Star did move in his own Orb. When St *Paul* speaks of *his boasting according to the measure of the rule, and not in anothers line*, he intimates, that every Apostle had his Bounds and Province. The words allude to the measure, whereby Surveyers use to adjust the rights of others, and assign to every one their proper allotment: or to the white Line, which the Agonisticall law did oblige Racers to conform their course unto, and by no means to run over. They did not visit in every City, but those in which they preached. Though they had a commission to teach in all the world, yet they had none to govern, but where they taught with success, & gained Proselytes to the Faith. Those who lived without the pale of the Church, like the earth before propriety was settled, were *primi occupantis*. The Apostles, who took the first possession of their minds, had a peculiar right to the Government of them. The vanquished did lie under an obligation to submit to the laws and regiment of their Conquerour. St *Chrysost.* observes, that these words, ὃν δὲ κατηγείλαμεν, do manifest τὴν ἀνάγκην τῆς ἐπισκέψεως, *the necessity of Inspection*. What they planted, they were obliged

1 Cor. 1. 2. Acts 13. 1. Acts 8. 1.

2 Cor. 10. 16.

liged to water, and by a prudent diſcipline, to eradicate every thing, whereby the growth of it might be impeded. They ſtanding in a paternall relation to ſuch, who were begotten again by the Word which they had preached, it would have been an omiſſion of Duty not to have intereſted themſelves in the nurture of them.

5. Here is the end and deſign of the Viſitation, to *ſee how they do*. Though in the Greek we have onely theſe words, πῶς ἔχουσι, yet the Syriack verſion is as full as ours, *ut videamus, quid agant*. Theſe Apoſtles knew, that thoſe whom they converted to the Faith, were obnoxious to many diſtempers. In the converted *Jews* there were remaining ſome *faces* of their former diſeaſe. They nauſeated the Bread of Life, and made it their choice to pick and eat the rubbiſh of the partition Wall, which *Chriſt* had demoliſhed. The Rights of the Law, which expired at the death of *Chriſt*, and by this time had an honourable interment, they attempted to pull out of their graves, and give a reſurrection to them. The converted *Gentiles* were not totally delivered from the power of former cuſtom and education. Amidſt theſe circumſtances the infernal Spirit was not backward to act his part. The Sun of Righteouſneſs could no ſooner in any place appear above the Horizon; but he did endeavour to raiſe his miſts in order to the obſcuring of him. Some of his Inſtruments were animated with ſo much confidence, as to arrogate to themſelves the dignity, which is peculiar to the Son of God. *Simon Magus*, who is ſtiled his firſt born, did not content himſelf with this uſurpation, but invaded the Rights of the Sacred Trinity. He aſſerted, he was the Father among the *Samaritanes*, the Son among the *Jews*, the Holy Ghoſt among the *Gentiles*. In the new Heavens there were ſome Planets, which did affect an erratick motion. In the new earth ſome weeds preſently ſprang up. In Paradiſe regained, the temptation began at the Tree of Knowledge. *Epiph. l. 1, tom. 2. p. 55.*

ledge. There was a ſcience falſly ſo called, which gave denomination to the *Gnoſticks*. They pretended to know how to ſecure their Title to the Heavenly Purchaſe, and yet to deny the Lord that bought them. The Grace of God, which teacheth ſobriety, they found a way to turn into wantonneſs, and make it a Pander to their impure appetites They were impatient to ſit under the government of the Apoſtles, being deſirous to inveſt themſelves with the Preeminence. They did ἀτάκτως περιπατεῖν trample under foot the τάξις or order, which was of Divine Erection. In theſe circumſtances among the influences of ſo many infectious examples, the Brethren being not exempted from the peril of contagion, the Holy Apoſtles were ſolicitous about their Welfare, and make this motion, *Let us viſit our Brethren, and ſee how they do.*

The Parts of the Text being thus explained, are reducible to two Heads. A diſeaſe, which *the Brethren* are ſuppoſed to be obnoxious to. A remedy, namely, an Apoſtolicall or Epiſcopall Authority and Inſpection.

1. A diſeaſe. The Greek Scholiaſt obſerves, that the Apoſtle went to them καθάπερ ἰατρὸς ὅτι τοὺς κάμνοντας, as a Phyſitian goes to his Patients. The beſt of men, in this military and ſublunary State, are apt to fall into Diſtempers.

This will be very conſpicuous, if we conſider the hereditary corruption, which is in all by nature. The remains of it in thoſe who are renewed by Grace. The pronity of the Tempter to ſolicite theſe remains, and invite them forth into Act.

1. The hereditary corruption in all by nature. When the firſt Man was formed, Divine Wiſdom, to oblige him to ſuch a degree of Circumſpection as might prevent his deviation, was pleaſed to enact, that if he perſevered in his allegiance, his offspring ſhould reap the benefit of his obedience: but if he tranſgreſſed, the diſadvantage ſhould

accrew

accrew to them. This is called תורת האדם *the law of Adam*, 2 *Sam.* 7. 19. Even as earthly Princes uſe to animate their Subjects to a loyall deportment by conferring ſuch honour upon them as deſcends upon their Poſterity: and to deterr them from Treaſon, by making their Progeny, who have the greateſt ſhare in their affections, obnoxious to the conſequences of their diſloyalty. Upon this account, when *Adam* was made a Lord, the dignity was conveyed in theſe words, *Let them have dominion*; which Gen. 1. 26. intimates that the honour was not to ſtay in him, but to deſcend upon his Poſterity. The Minatory Law, in the day that thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt die, the Greek Interpreters read, ἡ δ' ἂν ἡμέρᾳ φάγητε ἀπ' αὐτῆς, Gen. 2. 17. θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε; *in the day that ye eat thereof, ye ſhall die*; which ſignifies, that the curſe did not terminate in his perſon, but was entailed upon his Poſterity. *Adam* violating the law in the moſt aggravating circumſtances, believing the ſerpent and a woman, in a report which did make a moſt diſhonourable reflexion upon his Creator, ſo ſoon as he had received ſo ſignall a benefit from him, as his Exiſtence, was placed in a Paradiſe adorned with the higheſt gratifications of ſence, furniſhed with abilities ſutable to the demands of the Law, he drew the curſe upon himſelf and his poſterity. Upon this account there comes to be an attainder of bloud, and all, which are deſcended from him, are infected with an hereditary diſtemper. In this there is ſuch a degree of Notoriety, that there are ſcarcely any whoſe obſervation it hath eſcaped. This is the diſeaſe, which the Moraliſt ſaies, *Socrates* did endeavour to cure. *Plato*'s Preexiſtence of Souls, and their impriſonment in the body for their delinquency, is but an obſcure delineation of the repreſentative Preexiſtence of the Souls of all men in their firſt Parent, and the miſery they are expoſed unto in the body, upon the account of their delinquency in their repreſentative State. *Origen*

 thinks,

Cont. Celſum l. 4. p. 190. thinks, that by the garden of *Jupiter* he meant Paradiſe, by ὄφις *the ſerpent*, by πῶρος *the man which was circumvented*. The *Cabbaliſts* in *Bereſhith Rabba* obſerve, that the word תולדות which ſignifies generations, is written without ו in all places of Scripture except two, *Gen.* 2. 4. *Ruth* 4. 18. to import a ſinfull defect by nature in all the generations of Mankind. They ſay, the reaſon why it is inſerted *Gen.* 2. 4. where the Generations of Heaven are mentioned, is to intimate, that man, as he came from Heaven in his primitive ſtate, was perfect: and *Ruth* 4. 18. where *Pharez* is ſpoken of, to import, that the *Meſſias* the ſon of *Pharez* is the perſon deſigned to take away this defect.

2. As there is an hereditary diſtemper in all by Nature, ſo likewiſe there are ſome remains of it in thoſe who are renewed by Grace. S. *Paul*, who was caught up into the third heaven, complains of a body of ſin. The Ivy hath ſo inſinuated it ſelf into the wall, that there are ſmall hopes of a totall extirpation, till death comes, and the wall be pulled down. Divine Wiſdom, though *Carthage* be ſubdued, is pleaſed not utterly to demoliſh it, that the gifts and graces which are conferred by the Holy Spirit may be kept in exerciſe. *Theophilus*, when he took down the Idols in *Alexandria*, ſuffered one to remain in a publick place, that thoſe who were converted from them to the living God, might have daily occaſion to humble themſelves by a remembrance of their former folly.

3. Theſe remains the internall Spirit makes it his buſineſs to invite and draw forth into act. He is ſtiled by the *Hebrews* סמאל *quaſi* סר מאל *avertens à Deo*, not onely upon the account of his own departure from God, but his daily attempts to entice others into a diſloyal deportment towards him. He hath given undoubted teſtimonies of his activity this way in all ages. When *Moſes* was dead, he contended with the Arch-angel about his body, believing

ving, if the remains of the mortality of ſo excellent a perſon were in his poſſeſſion, they might be of eminent uſe to draw forth thoſe inclinations which are in men to make religious addreſſes to the dead. Though the Angel diſappointed the uſe of this *medium*, yet he obtained his end by other ſtratagems. He prevailed with the *Thebans* to worſhip him under the diſguiſe of *Bacchus*. *Bacchus*'s extraction out of the water, when an infant, his having two mothers, his mother by nature nurſing of him at the command of a Queen, his tranſcendent beauty, his name *Miſes* by an eaſie mutation in the punctation, *Moſes*, his teaching the Rites appertaining to Sacrifice, his drying up *Orontes* and *Hydaſpes* with his *Thyrſus*, the converſion of an ivy-ſtaff into a ſerpent, the *Indians* being in darkneſs, when the *Bacchæ* enjoyed light, the *Bacchæ*'s fetching water out of a rock, do ſo well comport with the ſtory of *Moſes*, that they make it evident, that He whom the *Greeks* worſhipped under the name of Διόνυσος was *Moſes the man of God*. When the Sons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord, the Text ſaies, that Satan came in the midſt of them. He placed himſelf in the center, that he might with the greater advantage communicate his influence to all the parts of the Circumference. We find him ſtanding at the right hand of *Joſhua* the high Prieſt, in a readineſs to faſten upon him, as the viper did upon S. *Paul*. In the New Teſtament we read of his throne in the Church of *Pergamos*. He did not content himſelf with an inferior capacity, but ſate as a Prince to challenge obedience to his inſtitutions. *Juſtin Martyr* in his Apology to *Antoninus* obſerves, that before the Incarnation he made uſe of the Poets to ſpeak many things of the ſons of *Jupiter* very agreeable to the character of the *Meſſias*; as that *Perſeus* was born of a Virgin, *Æſculapius* cured all diſeaſes, Διόνυσος died a cruel death: on purpoſe, that when theſe things ſhould be reported concerning the true

Pauſan. in Lacon.

Plutar. de Iſ. & Oſir.

Nonn. Dion. Sanſor. de deſc. l. 1. p. 28, 29, 31.

Job 1. 6.

Zech. 3. 1.

Rev. 2. 13.

Apol. 2. ad Ant. pium. p. 89, 90.

and onely Son of God, he might with the greater facility induce the world to believe, they were nothing but Poeticall fables. *Euſebius* in the life of *Conſtantine* ſays, that by his contrivance the dark receſs of *Venus* was built upon the place where our bleſſed Lord was buried, and execrable Sacrifices offered upon her impure Altars; certainly not onely with a deſign to obliterate the memory of his Sepulchre, but likewiſe to inſinuate an opinion, that he had obtained the conqueſt, and the worſhip of his erection was ſuperiour to that which our Saviour had inſtituted.

L. 3. c. 25. p. 369. Col.

He that conſiders the morbifick matter, which is in all by Nature, the *faces* and remains of it in the beſt of Men during their militant ſtate, the endeavours of the Prince of the air to infect it with his impure temptations, will not wonder, that thoſe who breathe in it ſhould be obnoxious to diſtempers.

So much of the Diſeaſe in generall ſuppoſed in the Text. And now for our more diſtinct information, I ſhall nominate ſome particular diſtempers, which have no favourable aſpect upon the peace and proſperity of the Church. Theſe are *in corde*, *in ore*, *in aure*, *in opere*.

1. *In corde*, as pride. When S. *Paul* propheſies of *perilous times in the laſt days*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. in his catalogue of thoſe who make them, the proud and high-minded are mentioned. This is a diſtemper, which thoſe who challenge a right to be enrolled among Chriſtians, are not exempted from, and hath a Minatory aſpect upon the true intereſt and welfare of the Church. When men make proud reflexions upon their own imaginary Worth, and are poſſeſſed with high thoughts of it, they are preſently ſurpriſed with deſires that others may be of the ſame opinion: this puts them upon excogitating methods, how to make themſelves known, and finding that this cannot be done ſo long as they continue in the crowd, (they being

not tall enough to make themselves more conspicuous then other men) they resolve upon a separation: and for the justification of it, set their wits a work to condemn that Church which their own ambition hath divorced them from. Thus with an unusuall degree of confidence pretending to be wiser then others, they do by degrees insinuate an Opinion into those who are weak, and of a more innocent meaning, that they are so indeed. By this means they gain a Party to themselves, set open a door to Ataxy, bring contempt upon Government, expose publick Worship to neglect, and like the Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, hinder the people from going to *Jerusalem*. It is said, that the temple of *Diana* was set on fire by one who had no other inducement but to make himself a name: and that when *Tiberius* moved the Senate to put *Christ* into the number of their Gods, the onely reason why they did it not, was because that they themselves did not make the first motion. There is nothing more injurious to our blessed Lord, and that Temple which is of his erection, then this distemper. By this means Idols are preferred before Him, his Church put into flames, and all that is Sacred, and devoted to his honour, calcined, and converted into ashes. But let all such persons have a care: The Lord of Hosts is their enemy. He sets himself in battel against them: and that disdain, which they constantly breathe, disobliges all men, no man loves to be contemned, and that Person is but in an ill condition, who hath neither the love of God nor Man. Herostratus.

2. *In Ore.* When pride hath formed men into parties, the next step they take is by reproaches to ruine the reputation of those who differ from them, and impede the accomplishment of their design. Reputation being to actions, what feathers are to arrows, making them fly the better, and pierce the deeper, they desire to deprive their adversary of this advantage. The Stars in *Christs* right hand

they

they endeavour to obſcure with clouds of contumely, and make his Embaſſadours as ridiculous as *Hanun* did *Davids*. There is ſome affinity in the Hebrew betwixt דֶּבֶר a word, and דֶּבֶר which ſignifies the plague. Theſe by their peſtilentiall words and impure breath deſire to infect the good names of others, that they may be in no capacity to withſtand them. Such in the Prediction of S. *Paul* concerning the laſt times are ſtiled διάβολοι. They participate much of that temper, which he is of, who is uſually known by the name ὁ διάβολος. He has been active in all Ages in defaming the Eſtabliſhed Worſhip of God, and thoſe who have been peculiarly devoted to the advancement of it. Before the coming of *Chriſt* he raiſed a report, that the Jews worſhipped a Swine. This gained ſo much belief, that it is diſputed in *Plutarch* what ſhould be the reaſon of ſo deep an Infatuation. It was with equall confidence aſſerted, that they gave Divine honour to an Aſs. *Apion* affirmes, that, when the Temple was ranſacked by *Antiochus Epiphanes*, the head of an Aſs was found in the Holy of Holieſt. Chriſtian Religion, after it came to be ſettled by our Bleſſed Lord and his Holy Apoſtles, received the ſame meaſure with advantage. It was credibly reported, that thoſe who embraced it, when they did convene, uſed to kill an infant as a token of their confederation. Commentaries of the Acts of *Chriſt* and *Pilate* were forged, full of reproach and blaſphemy, and two infamous Women compelled to aſſert, that they had once been Chriſtians, and that they knew by their own experience thoſe things to be true, which were contained in them. The ſame temper of Calumniating ſtill remains. The evil ſpirit takes no delight in Order; and therefore where he finds it ſettled, he endeavours to load it with diſgrace, crying out of Antichriſt in the inſtitutions of *Chriſt*, and that thoſe who adhere to them, are arrived at *Rome*, when they are no nearer then *Jeruſalem*. If there be any failings

Symp. l. 4. q. 5. p. 670. *Tac. Hiſt. l. 5. p. 425.* *Lip. Joſ. cont. Apion. l. 2. p. 1067.*

Min. Fæl. *Euſ. Hiſt. l. 9. c. 4. p. 359. Col.*

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in their converſation, they are ſure to be repreſented in the blackeſt colours, and by all the advantages of art improved into a condemnation of the whole Conſtitution. This diſtemper in the Tongue hath communicated a great ſtrength to Atheiſm. Publick Religion like matter always exiſting under ſome form: and every form being diſcredited by the railery of one Party againſt another: The Atheiſt is apt to conclude, that it is not to be found under any of them; and by conſequence, that it is nothing but a Genericall notion, a meer *Chimæra*, a Phantaſm formed by the power of ſome credulous underſtanding.

This hath likewiſe been an inſet to profaneneſs, and a principall means to erect the Chair of the Scorner. Thoſe who pretend Religion, by the aſperity and diſorder of their tongues, leſſening that reverence which is due to it, and pulling up the fence, which ſhould have ſecured it againſt rudeneſs and contempt; profane Perſons have been encouraged to an undecent and unbecoming familiarity; deſigning to make ſport with it, as the *Philiſtines* did with *Sampſon*, and will not be convinced of their folly, till a ſurpeizall by ſome ſuddain calamity. How expedient is it therefore to be vigilant in preventing this Diſtemper? It is a matter of ſome difficulty. *Socrates* ſpeaks of *Pamba*, who profeſſed he had ſpent nineteen Years in learning the firſt Verſe of the 35 Pſalm, and had ſcarcely accompliſhed his deſires. The importance is equall to the difficulty. S. *James* ſays, *that he which bridleth not his tongue, his Religion is in vain.* It is neceſſary, that the ſame motto ſhould be engraven upon the Bridle of the tongue, as it is to be upon the bridles of horſes. *Zech.* 14. 20. *Holineſs to the Lord.* L. 4. Hiſt. c. 18.

3. *In Aure.* When men are grown to ſuch a degree of prejudice, and an inordinate heat for their own Fancies, as that their Tongues are bliſtered with it, the Ear likewiſe is preſently infected. *They turn away from the Truth,*

Truth, 2 *Tim.* 4. 4. and grow perfectly deaf to all instructions, which tend to the discovery of their errour. The most potent arguments they look upon as so many temptations to disquiet them in the fruition of their Infallibility. Like the Adder they stop their ears, though *the Charmer charm never so wisely*. They look upon their own Party to be as *Gideons Fleece*, filled with Celestial dew, when all the Earth about them lies dry. They have sailed so far in the Ocean of Truth, that they are arrived at *Herculs* Pillars. Whatsoever may be thought of a *Terra incognita*; yet they do not think there is any *Coelum incognitum*. This makes them to disdain the advice of all who differ from them, neglect to attend upon that Ministry, which is settled to give them better Information, to use the common prudence, which they will do in all other cases. If there be any question about the Title to their Estates, they will advise with the most learned Council: if any disease in their bodies, with the most experienced Physician: but if there be any distemper in their Soul, (as though it was the onely trifle, which did belong to them) every Mountebank and bold Undertaker in Divinity will serve the turn, and shall be preferred before those Ministers who have spent their time in studying the Holy Scriptures, enjoyed the best advantages to interpret them, and may make a much fairer claim to the Aids of the Divine Spirit. If it was the method of Heavenly Wisdom under the Old Testament to conferr a Prophetick Spirit upon those who had been trained up in the Schools of the Prophets, the counsell of S. *Paul* in the New, to give attendance to Reading, there is much more reason to presume, that the Spirit of God may rather fall upon men in a Library, then in a Shop: upon those, who are studious and industrious, then upon such as are idle, and stand gazing about them.

4. *In Opere.* When men are so espoused to their own Party,

Party, that they are grown perfectly deaf to the inſtructions of all others: the next ſtep they take, is to attempt the introduction of confuſion; hoping, if they can be ſo unfortunate, as to break off the golden Rings, whereby the parts of the Community are chained together, and melt them with their intemperate heat, the Idol, which they deſire to erect, may come forth. It is believed, that *Bel*, the *Babylonian Numen*, is derived from בלל *confundere*, and imports as much as Confuſion. This is a Deity, to which not onely Heathens, but thoſe who pretend to better principles, pay too much reſpect. To this they ſacrifice their diſſatisfactions with publick Order. They take diſtaſt at the leaſt defect: quarrel with the Sun becauſe of his ſpots; are diſpleaſed with the Golden age, becauſe of ſome droſs in it. They are not fully reconciled to the Theocracy of the Old Teſtament; becauſe ſome things were permitted *propter duritiem cordis*. They cannot prevail with themſelves to take contentment in any Conſtitution, that is not arrived at an abſolute Perfection: and are unwilling to conſider, that the incommodities, which they complain of, will be as nothing, if compared with thoſe miſchiefs, which are the inevitable conſequences of a diſſolution. Theſe take pleaſure to contemplate in their Engyſcopes thoſe inconveniences which are at hand; and magnifie them into amazing and terrifying proportions: but never uſe their Teleſcopes to view the dreadfull Calamities which are afar off, and will certainly attend the ſubverſion of the preſent Polity. He is very much a ſtranger to the nature of the Church, who believes, it can continue without order: and he is as much a ſtranger to our affairs, who conceives, if the preſent Order had a period put unto it, that the Diſſenters would ever pitch upon any one Way, in the which they would all agree. Though they may be unanimous and harmonious in the Methods of Subverſion: yet when they come to build again, there

will be as much Discord and Confusion, as there was at *Babel*. And if Order be necessary, and none can be agreed upon among our selves, what can we expect, but that the Romanists out of their abundant Charity should commiserate our case, and do us the kindness, when the Community is dissolved, to cast us into their own mould? who in stead of three Ceremonies will introduce an hundred. In the room of the Liturgy, which the most acuminated Intellect is not able with justice to charge with any errour, impose offices, which are stuffed with the grossest Superstitions: in the place of the Church, in which there are the most efficacious inducements to a Good Life, erect one, in which there are the greatest impediments. And to add to this favour, in stead of convincing us into a submission by the light of the Sacred Oracles, will use a more compendious way, and do it by fire. Indeed it is said, they are now grown better natured, but it is ill trusting, so long as their constitution remains the same. If their being brought under by the Laws of this Nation hath wrought them into better temper, it is pitty they should be tempted out of their Humanity by the advantages of Power. It is true, they will so far oblige those, who by fomenting our Divisions keep open a gap for them, as to deny the *jus divinum* of Prelates, and to sink them into the same Order with Presbyters: but at the bottom no kindness is intended. Their design being to advance the B. of *Rome*, they make him and not *Christ* the immediate Fountain of that Authority, which the Governours of the Church are vested in: and Transubstantiation being the highest mystery of their Religion, and Presbyters undoubtedly interested in it, they are unwilling to allow any Order in the Church superior to them, believing, that such a Concession may lessen the dignity of that Mystery.

Conc. Triden. *l.*7. *p.*610, 611, 612.

Hitherto I have spoken of the Disease, both in general and particular, which is supposed in the Text. And now I shall

ſhall paſs on to the Remedy, namely, an Apoſtolicall or Epiſcopall Authority and Inſpection. What S. *Paul* and S. *Barnabas* did, was not an act of Charity onely, but Authority. This was the φάρμακον in the Primitive age, which was uſed in order to the preventing and healing Diſtempers. As our bleſſed Lord retained the Power in his own hand during his reſidence upon the Earth, ſo likewiſe did his Apoſtles. And therefore as he is ſtiled ἐπίσκοπος, 1 *Pet.* 2. 25. ſo their Office ἐπισκοπὴ, *Acts* 1. 10. The Inſpection of the Churches within a certain precinct was committed to them. S. *James* was ſettled betimes at *Jeruſalem* for this Sacred purpoſe. S. *Paul* at his firſt coming, found him reſiding upon his Epiſcopall Charge: at his laſt both him and his Elders in a moſt ſolemn Aſſembly. The Brethren came from him to *Antioch* as their Biſhop about Eccleſiaſticall Concerns. Although others of the Apoſtles were preſent at *Jeruſalem*: yet the Canon of the Council was drawn up in his words. *Euſebius* ſaies, that the Chair, which was peculiar to him, was preſerved unto his time.

Gal. 1. 18, 19.

Acts 21. 18.

Gal. 2. 12.

Acts 15. 20.

Euſeb. *Hiſt. Eccl. l.* 7. *c.* 19. *p.* 265. *par.*

This ſettlement was made immediately after the Paſſion of our Lord as a pattern for the reſt of the Apoſtles to imitate in their ſeverall Plantations. As the Goſpel was diſperſed through all Nations, beginning at *Jeruſalem*, *Luke* 24. 27. ſo likewiſe the Law, whereby the converted Nations were to be governed, *Iſa.* 2. 3. Therefore S. *Paul* in order to the Reforming ſome abuſes at *Corinth*, tacitely makes an appeal to it, as the place from which the Word of the Lord firſt came, 1 *Cor.* 14. 36. There being an impoſſibility, that all things in every place ſhould come to a fulneſs of growth, and be ripened into an exactneſs of Order in a moment, Divine providence ſettled at firſt this ſenſible rule for all, who were intereſted in the Regiment of the Church, to operate by, and come up unto, as the circumſtances of every place would permit. And

therefore in a Conformity to it, we read of *Titus* being left in *Crete*, and *Timothy* at *Epheſus*. Their not reſiding always in thoſe places, can be no more an argument of their not being Biſhops there, then it would be, that *Richard* the Firſt was not King of *England*, becauſe our Chronicle repreſents him ſometimes in *Cyprus*, ſometimes in *Germany*, ſometimes in the *Holy Land*.

Agreeable likewiſe to this pattern are the ſeven Angels enthroned in the Churches of *Aſia* by the approbation of our bleſſed Lord, as is maniteſt by his letters to them, in which he commends thoſe Vertues, which did appear in the diſcharge of their Function. His right hand was the firmament, in which thoſe *Pleiades* were fixed.

They cannot (as ſome would perſwade us) ſignifie ſeven Churches. The Churches are ſtiled Candleſticks, the Angels Stars. So long as Stars are of a nature diſtinct from Candleſticks, the Angels muſt import ſome thing different from the Churches.

Neither can they be ſeven Colleges of Elders; for ὁ ἄγγελος properly denotes one individual. This is the conſtant import of it in all other parts of holy Writ: and there is nothing in the Context, which may oblige us to depart from the cuſtomary ſignification. The plurall ὑμῖν c. 2. v. 24. hath no neceſſary relation to the Angel of *Thyatira*, but may without any incongruity be referred to thoſe who are mentioned v. 23. *I will give to every one of you according to his works*; that is, you who have received the doctrine of *Jezebel*, ſhall receive puniſhment according to the merit of your crime: and then it follows, but I ſay unto you, and to the reſt, which have not this Doctrine. It is a received Rule, that we are not to deſert the proper import of any word, and flie to an improper, but where thoſe things which ſtand in conjunction put a neceſſity upon us.

Neither can the ſeven Angels be ſeven Paſtours of ſo many

many particular Congregations. For all, which did adhere to the Doctrine of *Christ* in the *Lydian Asia*, are contained under the Seven Churches: and it will be very difficult for any to believe, that there were no more Congregations within that Compass. In *Ephesus* alone, where it is said, *that the Word of the Lord mightily grew*, *Acts* 19.20. there could be no fewer then that number. Oratories and places of Convention could be of no great capacity in those times, when Christians were hindred from building by continuall storms of Persecution.

Therefore there is nothing left for ὁ ἄγγελος to signifie but one Individuall Person having the care and inspection of divers Congregations. The best Records next unto the Scripture inform us, that *Polycarp* one undoubtedly invested in a power of this Latitude, was the Angel of the Church of *Smyrna*. From whence we may easily compute, what we are to determine concerning the rest; all the seven Stars being represented without any disparity in their Magnitude.

Timothy and *Titus* with these Seven must not be looked upon as Presidents, or Chairmen onely, having a Primacy of Order among the Presbyters. It is most evident, that they had not onely a power to Visit, and govern the Laity, but the Deacons and Elders themselves. These they did examine, ordain, provide for their maintenance, had Authority to receive an accusation against them, stop the mouths of such who did teach false doctrine, reject the Heretically, and are charged in their severall Consistories to prejudice no man, nor to be byassed with any partiall regards. The Angel of *Ephesus* is commended for trying those who pretended to be Apostles: of *Thyatira* reproved for suffering such as did teach and seduce the people: which can argue no less then a Superiority vested in them over the Pastours and Teachers of those Churches.

1 Tim. 3. 10. & 5. 22. 17, 19. Tit. 1. 1 [illegible] 10. 1 Tim. 5. 21. Rev. 2. 2. Rev. 2. 20.

If the power had not been in these Persons alone, why

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is the Charge directed to them, commendation given, when performed; reprehenſion, when neglected, without the leaſt mention of any coordinate Society? Had they been in the quality of Chairmen onely (whoſe office is to preſerve Order in the Convention) without any concluſive power in themſelves, the doing of the things would not have been impoſed as their duty, but the *modus* or manner, how they were to be done: namely not in a confuſed and tumultuary way, but in methods agreeable to the Rules of all regular Societies.

When *Timothy* is commanded *to fight the good fight*, lay hold on eternal life; to keep that which was committed to him: and *Titus* to ſpeak the things which become ſound Doctrine, rebuke with all Authority, avoid fooliſh queſtions: we may as well conclude, that theſe things were not to be done without the concurrence of the Elders, as thoſe before mentioned. There is nothing expreſſed in the Text which diſcovers any diſcrimination. The independency of their Power is viſible in the deportment of the Apoſtles, whoſe Delegates they were. S. *Paul* challengeth to himſelf alone an Authority to ſet in order what was amiſs, to deliver to Satan, to viſit with his rod, and exempts no degrees, whether Elders or people from being the objects of it.

L 3. c. 23. *Euſebius* out of *Clemens* informs us of S. *John's* Viſitation of the Clergy and Laity in the Churches of *Aſia*. *Epiphanius* of S. *Peters* in *Pontus* and *Bythinia*. If *Titus* and *Timothy* were delegated to do the work of an Apoſtle, as it is moſt evident they were: and an Apoſtle did act without a dependance upon the Elders; we have reaſon to conclude that their obligations to them were no greater.

L. 1. tom. 2. p. 107. par.

Elders indeed were ordained in every City, but not to govern alone. What they did was in a ſubordination to the Apoſtles. The Apoſtles acted without their concurrence: but we never read that they did any thing, for which

which they were not accountable to the Apoſtles. In the caſe of the inceſtuous *Corinthian*, the Spirit and Authority of S. *Paul* was the firſt mover. In the Ordination of *Timothy*, the hands of the holy Apoſtle were ſignally intereſted.

If any find themſelves diſpoſed to believe, that this Authority to Viſit and Govern the Clergy by a ſingle Perſon was a remedy adapted onely to the Primitive times; and that in after-ages the Apoſtolicall Superiority was to be laid aſide, and a Parity prevail: they will meet with no ſmall inducement to alter their minds, if they pleaſe impartially to weigh theſe three Particulars; The reaſon of the thing, the declaration of God, the practiſe of the Univerſall Church.

1. The reaſon of the thing. The conſtitution of the Church is ſuch, that it cannot continue long in Repairs without Inſpection and Government. Though the Univerſall is built upon a Rock, yet particular Churches are liable to Dilapidations. And if Government be neceſſary, no Form ought to take place and be preferred before that which prevailed in the Apoſtolicall Age. Thoſe who are moſt under the power of imagination, will ſcarcely be able to fancy, that He who ſhed his precious bloud in order to the purchaſing a Church, ſhould be ſo unconcerned for it, as to leave it in the world without Rules of Settlement: that He who did erect this new Society, ſhould contrary to the method of all Founders, leave it without Statutes preſcribing the modes of Regulation: That He who had the government upon his ſhoulder ſhould aſcend with it to Heaven, and not depoſite it in ſome prudent hands to ſecure his Subjects upon the earth againſt the inevitable inconveniences of Anarchy: that He who is the great Shepherd, ſhould leave his Flock either to be governed by the tremulous deciſions of their own diſcretion, or elſe the pleaſure of the Civil Powers, which by his

his unerring preſcience, he was aſſured would have for three hundred years the ſame degree of kindneſs for them, as Wolves have for Sheep: that He who after his Reſurrection ſpent fourty days upon the Earth, ſpeaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, ſhould paſs by in ſilence the regiment of it, which is a matter of no ſmall moment, and hath an inſeperable connexion with the ſubject of his diſcourſe: that He who gave a poſitive commiſſion to his Apoſtles undoubtedly containing ſomething over and above the dictates of Nature, (which are, that the Church muſt be governed, in the Government there muſt be a Superiority in ſome, a Subordination in others. Superiours muſt have all becoming regards expreſſed to them, Inferiours be accountable for the violation of their Rules.) and yet expreſs nothing concerning the particular form of Government, which is the onely poſitive which could have been added to what the Light of Nature gives us the perception of. Though it is too great a preſumption to determine, what *Chriſt* hath appointed, by what we conceive he ought to appoint; our intellects being no competent judges of the Methods of his Wiſdom: yet when we find by Revelation, that he hath inſtituted a Church, would have this Church to be one, this one Church to be well governed, that ſome mode of Government is of indiſpenſable neceſſity in order to this end; it is not unbecoming our Chriſtian humility to pronounce, that he hath appointed a particular Form. He who wills the end, never fails to contrive the means which conduce to it. Amongſt the objects of our Belief we do not onely rank thoſe things which are found in the Scripture in particular propoſitions, but whatſoever hath an inſeperable connexion with ſuch Axioms.

And if it be reaſonable to believe, that our bleſſed Lord hath appointed ſome Government; none can make a more juſt claim to be it, then that which was practiſed by his holy

holy Apostles, who were inspired by his Spirit, and by reason of an intimate converse with him, did enjoy the most advantageous opportunities to gain a full comprehension of his mind. This certainly hath the best right to be the Standard, whereby all Models are to be tried, and from whence they are to receive their allowance or disallowance, according as they appear conformable or disagreeable to it. Though an argument from Apostolicall Practice in generall may fail, as is evident by the Lovefeasts, the community of Goods, the office of Deaconisses: yet when it is derived from such a *species* of Practice as is grounded upon universall Reason, and not upon peculiar respects, and incommunicable circumstances; the validity of it must be acknowledged. Those who have made the most scrupulous inquiry into the Government of the Apostles, can find nothing in it of an inseparable accommodation to that Age. It is true, the Unction whereby they were qualified for it, was not of the vulgar Composition. The holy Spirit gave them an unerring conduct in framing Rules of Discipline, a power to assert the authority of their actions by miraculous operations: yet their Function, namely to Govern was ordinary, and doth import nothing but what might be enjoyed by the Rulers of the Church in after-ages. The power may descend, where the same gifts and degrees of Aptitude to use it, do not. *Commodus* was inferiour to *Antonius* in politicall accomplishments, and yet did inherit his Power in the amplitude of it. *Caligula* was not comparable to *Augustus* in Architectonicall skill, and yet it would be injustice to deny him a place in the Imperiall Succession. Though *Solomon* was qualified for the exercise of his Regall Authority by superlative measures of Wisdom, yet there is no incongruity to assert, that *Rehoboam*, although he did not succeed him in the latitude of his Sapience, yet he did in his Government. The Apostolicall power is not too big for the

management of those who are not invested with miraculous gifts. If a Prince who can do no miracles, may be duly qualified to rule a whole Nation in Civil concerns; undoubtedly one Person may be fit to superintend in Ecclesiasticall within a certain Segment or Division of it, although he cannot *raise the dead*, or *remove mountains*. The reason of Apostolicall Gifts was peculiar to the circumstances of the first Age; but the reason of the Power and Government continues. Prelacy now hath the same aptitude to secure the ends of the Church as it had in the Primitive times. A Superintendency over the Clergy is equally necessary. Our work is of the same importance and difficulty. We have the same weaknesses of nature to betray us to errour and folly: no greater measures of Grace to secure us against the importunity of Temptation. And there is some reason to believe, that invitations to evil are now more acuminated. We are fallen into the dregs of the last Days, when the Tempter is nearer to his eternall Confinement; and therefore we may expect the most vigorous expressions of his malice. Nature at the approaches of Death usually puts forth the utmost of her activity. A Stone in its descent increaseth in the celerity of its Motion, as it comes nearer the Center.

This Imparity hath a naturall idoneity to prevent Anarchy, and therefore it hath been generally consented to as a most efficacious Antidote against it. Upon this account in all armies there is a Generall. Amongst the Elders of the Synagogues there was a chief Ruler: amongst the Priests of the *Heathen Deities*, *Sacerdos maximus*. In the College of the *Druidæ præsunt unus, qui summam inter eos habet Authoritatem*, are the words of *Cæsar*. Com. l. 6. p. 226

The usual Introduction to disorder is, when there are different judgements among those who are governed, and a mutiny in those who Govern, betwixt their private interests as Men, and publick as Governours. When the Power

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is lodged in a single Person, those two interests are more closely compacted and blended together: and there is a greater probability of an union of judgements, when all within a certain precinct lie under an obligation to be determined by the reason of one, then when they are to take their measures from the Judgements of many. Of this we need no other confirmation but our own Experience; our diversities of Opinion then commencing, and a Deluge of errour breaking in upon us when an *inæquitas* or *parity prevailed*. Levels are overflown, when Mountains lie dry. The middle Region is filled with clouds and disorder, when the upper is quiet and serene. *Jerusalem*, no obscure type of the Church, was built upon a hill. The Ark of *Noah*, a lively emblem of it, found no rest, till it came to settle upon *Mount Ararat*. S. *Jerome* tells us, that Prelacy was introduced *in remedium Schismatis*, as a cure to those ruptures which did menace the Church with Dissolution. Divisions now are as wide and mineatory as in the Primitive times; and there is no reason to believe, but that the same Remedy, if prejudice did not impede the due Application, might be as soveraign and energeticall in order to the Healing of them. Those who conceive that this form of Government was calculated for the Apostolicall Meridian onely, make the Apostles, (whom S. *Paul* represents as persons interested in the foundation, *Eph.* 2. 20.) like onely to Scaffolds in a Building, which are taken down so soon as the Edifice is completed, and assert that which hath a tendency to demolish all which is of their Erection. For if they may not be imitated in ruling the Church, then neither in teaching, baptizing or administring the Supper. It may with as much facility be asserted, that all these Actions were commanded onely to be used in the Primitive times: and so a fair way will be made for the entertainment of Enthusiasticall pretences, the *seculum Spiritûs Sancti*, and the laying aside the Gospel of *Christ*, as

a ſuperannuated Calendar.

All this, if rightly conſidered, can demonſtrate no leſs, then that there is the ſame reaſon now for an imparity in Eccleſiaſticall Government, as was in the Apoſtolicall age: and if the ſame, then ſuppoſing it was agreeable to the Divine Will in that period of time, it muſt neceſſarily be ſo ſtill. For the will of every rational Agent never altering but with reaſon, ſo long as the reaſon continues the ſame, it muſt be preſumed, that there is no mutation in his will.

2. As the Reaſon of the thing, ſo the declaration of God argues the perpetuity of Apoſtolicall Government. After the Apoſtles had received their Authority at *Jeruſalem*, they were more ſolemnly inaugurated in *Galilee* (as it is believed) in the preſence of five hundred Brethren, where the terms of their Commiſſion were more fully explicated. A poſitive injunction is given *to teach, baptize, and inſtruct all nations to obſerve whatſoever was commanded them.* Amongſt thoſe things which they received in command, one was to govern the Church, and to challenge obedience from all whether Miniſters or People. Of this we may have a competent aſſurance, if we conſider their Practice, which is no bad interpreter of the ambiguities of their Commiſſion, they being under the conduct of a Spirit, which would not permit them to tranſgreſs the juſt limits of it. The *Jews* have a ſaying, that every mans Apoſtle is as himſelf: to which there is an alluſion in thoſe words, *He that receiveth you, receiveth me.* The Apoſtles being perſons, whoſe wills were reſigned up to the will of him who ſent them: there is more then an ordinary preſumption, that their deportment was but a tranſcript of that Copy, which they received from him. To their practice we may add, as a further Confirmation, the words of our bleſſed Lord, *as my Father ſent me, ſo ſend I you.* The commiſſion of *Chriſt* as an Apoſtle did undoubtedly extend

Joh. 20. 21, 22, 23.

Mat. 28. 20.

tend to a Superintendency over the Clergy as well as the Laity: the particle καθως will justifie us in asserting the same of that, which the Apostles received from him there being nothing attributed to them in this particular, but what hath a fair consistency with their finite Capacities. As the Father gave the Keys to him, so he gave them to the Apostles. As the Father gave him a Throne, so he gave them Twelve to sit upon, and *judge the Tribes of Israel*: and therefore as his Jurisdiction did extend to all, whether Minister or People; so must theirs be necessarily of the same latitude. And for their greater encouragement to encounter those difficulties, which the exercise of their Authority might expose them to, he assures them by promise of a propitious influence not onely to be communicated to themselves, but those who should succeed them even to the end of the World. *Lo I am with you* πασας τας ἡμερας *all the days of your life*, and with you in your Successours, when there shall be a μεταβασεως or *transmigration of your power* ἐως της συντελειας του αἰωνος. *even to the end of the world*. That this Phrase is of no inferior an importance is manifest, *Mat.* 13. 39, 46, 48. In the words there is an accommodation to the manner of Speaking amongst the *Jews*, which divide the time from the Creation to the finall Period of the mundane System, into two Ages; the first extending to the Coming of the *Messias*, the second to the Dissolution of all things; συντελεια του αἰωνος cannot signifie the first Period, the *Messias* being in our Nature when the words were spoken: therefore they must by an unevitable consequence import the last.

To this S. *Paul* is very agreeable, *Eph.* 4. 11. where he asserts that the Apostles were given *for the perfecting of the Saints*, till all be brought into the unity of the Faith. This is the end of this most transcendent Gift, which hath not yet obtained a full accomplishment: and therefore if the means must continue till the end be obtained, the Apo- Ver. 12, 13.

stolicall

ſtolicall Function is not yet arrived at its finall Period. If it be objected, that this argument will conclude as well for the duration of Prophets and Evangeliſts, which are mentioned in the ſame Verſe: we may reply with ſecurity enough, that there is no inconvenience, if it do ſo. By Prophets we are not obliged from any thing in the Text to underſtand any other Perſons, then ſuch as had an excellent skill to preach the Goſpel out of the Books of the Old Teſtament, ſuch as *Judas* and *Silas* were. When the gift of Prophecy is mentioned, 1 *Cor.* 13. 2. *the underſtanding of myſteries*, namely Evangelical Doctrines locked up in the figures of the Law and the predictions of the Prophets, is immediately added as an *exegeſis* of it. The Evangeliſts are ſuch, as had a profound inſight into the εὐαγγέλιον or *Goſpel*, as contained in the writings of the New Teſtament; and could with ſingular dexterity open and explain its true importance. It is obſervable that this word was not in uſe till a conſiderable part of the New Teſtament was penned. In the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, which hath an early date, when S. *Paul* reckons firſt Apoſtles, ſecondly Prophets; and the method which he uſeth in his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, ſeems to engage him to give the third Place to Evangeliſts: yet he paſſeth them by in ſilence, the Church at that time being a ſtranger to the denomination.

Both theſe, as they ſtood in relation to Government, were of the ſame order, namely Suffragans to the holy Apoſtles: the Prophets are joyned with them, *Eph.* 2. 20. We read of *their impoſition of hands* in an Apoſtolicall manner, *Acts* 13. 3. *Timothy*, who is enjoined to do the work of an Evangeliſt, did cooperate with S. *Paul*, and miniſter to him in his Eccleſiaſticall concerns.

This being premiſed, I ſee no reaſon why ſuch perſons may not ſtill be continued. Biſhops are Succeſſors in ordinary to the Apoſtles, their Suffragans to the Prophets and Evan-

Evangelists. It is to be noted, that as the Apostles are joined with these two in the same Verse: so these are with Pastours and Teachers; that is Elders, which were set over particular Congregations, and Deacons (as *Theophylact* asserts) which did occasionally teach and help the Elders in their Ministeriall Function, and therefore are said to be given εἰς ἔργον διακονίας: the same end is prefixed for all of them, namely, the edifying the Body of *Christ*: and the same term of time set out for their duration, till all come into the unity of the Faith. Therefore if Pastours and Teachers are to continue in the Church, we have reason to believe the same concerning Prophets and Evangelists. The thing may remain, although there be an innovation in the Names.

In Ep. ad Eph. c. 4. 11.

Ver. 12.

The first Epistle to *Timothy* is very consonant to what hath been asserted. After the prescribing Rules, how to regulate his deportment in the Church of God, and in particular with what prudence to exercise his Superiority over an Elder, he leaves this injunction with him, I charge thee *to keep the Commandment untill the appearing of the Lord Jesus.* The mortality of *Timothy* rendring it impossible to do this in his own person, it is necessarily imployed, that there shall be a succession of some with the like Authority even to the second Coming of *Christ*.

c. 6. v. 14.

By the Commandment we must not understand onely what is expressed in the precedent Verse concerning *fighting the good fight*, but the systeme of rules delivered in the Epistle: ἐντολὴ *signanter*, must import what is principally commanded in it. That is principally enjoyned, which hath the most immediate connexion with the end for which it was written. The end of the penning of it was to instruct *Timothy* how to behave himself in the Church: therefore the precepts in the body of the Epistle, in particular those which relate to an Elder having the most direct aspect upon this end, must necessarily be contained in the com-

command which *Timothy* is charged to keep.

By the appearing of the Lord *Jesus* we are not obliged to understand *Timothy*'s decease. The time of death is never so stiled by S. *Paul* or any other in any part of Holy Writ: and it is not safe and becoming to attribute to the Apostle a manner of speaking, which neither he, nor any before him did ever use. Whereas the last coming of *Christ* is frequently stiled ἐπιφάνεια and the Context, which is no bad Interpreter, doth determine it to this sence in this place; for it imports such an appearance, as the blessed and onely Potentate shall shew καιροῖς ἰδίοις, *tempore, quod ipse novit*, namely at the Day of Judgement, the knowledge of which He hath entirely reserved to himself.

2 Tim. 4. 1. Tit. 2. 13.

All this can amount to no less then a Declaration of the Divine Pleasure, that the Apostolicall Government and Inspection should still be continued in the Christian Community.

3. As a further Evidence we have the practice of the universall Church, which (if after our most diligent inquiry into the Holy Scriptures, the sense of any branch of the Divine Will remains ambiguous) is the best Interpreter we know of. The Church may be considered in a twofold State; either under persecution, before the conversion of the Emperours to the Faith of *Christ*: or else in her prosperity, after *Constantine* the Great had obtained the throne. There are none who doubt, whether an Apostolicall imparity prevailed under the last Period. All the hesitancy is about the first: and yet upon a deliberate reflexion the matter will be beyond dispute. This is made up of three Centuries, the first of which must necessarily be resigned to the Apostles and their Delegates, who undoubtedly did exercise an Episcopall Authority, as we have before demonstrated. S. *John* the last of them who lived to the end of it, and wrote his *Revelation* about the ninety seventh Year, describes the Churches of *Asia*, every one with his tutelary Angell,

Angel, to ſuperintend and govern all, as well Teachers as People; and left them in *Trajans* time under this imparity.

As for the third Century, we have undoubted inſtances of a like inequality. In the Church of *Alexandria*, *Demetrius* the Biſhop excommunicated *Origen* a Presbyter. In the Church of *Carthage*, *Cyprian* paſſed the ſame cenſure upon *Felicissimus*. His taking up a reſolution not to act without the counſel of his Presbyters, was but a voluntary and prudent accommodation to ſome circumſtances which were peculiar to him in his Election, and no prejudice to his Hierarchicall Power, which he abundantly aſſerts to be veſted in him by a Divine Inſtitution. Hierom. *in Apol. ad.* Ruff. *Ep. 79. Pam. Epiſt. 38. ad* Caldon. *&c.*

In the Church of *Antioch*, the deportment of the Biſhops towards *Paulus Samoſatenus* in ſuppreſſing his Hereſie is an evident demonſtration of the exiſtence of ſuch Perſons at that time. In the Church of *Rome*, *Novatianus* a Presbyter his procuring three Biſhops to conſecrate him, that he might be in a capacity upon equall terms to enter the liſts with *Cornelius*, aſſures us; that they had then a Conſecration diſtinct from the Ordination of Elders. *Dionyſius*'s confining the Presbyters to particular Congregations, and ſetting out the juſt limits of their Pariſhes can evince no leſs then a Superiority over them. Euſ. H. E. *l. 7. c. 22.* Euſ. *c. 6. c. 35.* Platin. *in vita* Dionyſ.

In the laſt part of the ſecond Century, he that reads the conteſt betwixt *Victor* and the *Aſian* Biſhops about the celebration of *Eaſter*: the interpoſals of *Polycrates* B. of *Epheſus*, and *Irenæus* Biſhop of *Lyons* in order to the making a compoſure, muſt do a great deal of violence to his own underſtanding, before he will be able to perſwade himſelf, that there was not at that time ſuch an order of Men very well known in the World. Euſ. H. *l. 5. c.* 23, 24.

This is ſo evident, that *Blondell* himſelf doth freely acknowledge an Epiſcopall Power to be lodged in a ſingle Perſon about the fortieth year of the ſecond Century. So that granting, that the Apoſtles and their Suffraganes did

retain the Regiment of the Church in their own hands during the first, which cannot be denied by any, who impartially peruse the records of the New Testament, the question which hath given so much Molestation to the Christian World, will be reduced to this state: Whether the Church for the space of sixteen hundred years and upwards hath been without the Apostolicall or Episcopall Government for the space of Forty onely.

Should we grant that which can never be proved, namely, that the Stream of Apostolicall Authority did, like the river *Guadian* in *Spain*, conceal it self, and run under ground for this little time, this would no more be an argument to induce us to believe, that the use of it is to be superseded, then it was to the *Israelites*, that the Regall power was to be laid aside, because of the *interregnums*, which did frequently put a demurr upon the succession.

But secondly it doth not appear, that there hath been any such *interregnum* in the Church and Kingdom of *Christ*. Notwithstanding the obscurities of the History of that time, yet there are catalogues extant of the chiefest Cities, as *Jerusalem*, *Antioch*, *Alexandria*, *Rome*; wherein are named the single Persons as distinct from and superior to Presbyters, who were interested in the Power of Inspection during the space which is spoken of: and if it was thus in the greater Cities, it is not hard to divine, how it was in the less. The Unity of the Church includes a Uniformity of Government. The first who leads the Van in the catalogue is either an Apostle or Evangelist, as S. *Peter* in that of *Antioch*, S. *Mark* in that of *Alexandria*, who undoubtedly were vested in an Episcopall Jurisdiction. Those who conclude it, are acknowledged by all to have the same Power: why it should be denied to those in the middle, no good reason can be produced, they being represented, as having an equall share in the Succession, which cannot be, except they were in the fruition of the same Power. A succession

ceſſion but not in the ſame thing is like a Reſurrection, but not of the ſame Body; which is no reſurrection at all.

Let us ſuppoſe amongſt the nine Ἄρχοντες at *Athens*, one of them the firſt Year to be veſted in a Superiority over his Colleagues, as an Apoſtle or an Evangeliſt was over the Elders, and the next the conſtitution to be metamorphized into a Parity, and to continue for forty Years, as *Blondell* conceives the Eccleſiaſticall equality did, and then after the expiration of that Term, the former imparity to be introduced again: It would be an incongruity ſcarcely to be paralleled to repreſent the Ἄρχων of the ſecond Year as a Succeſſor to him of the firſt, he enjoying nothing of his Power: or the Ἄρχων of the forty firſt to him of the fortieth, he enjoying a Power paramount, which the other was never acquainted with.

This would be as inconvenient, as if we ſhould make a liſt of the Kings of *Rome*, and after *Tarquinius Superbus* place *Junius Brutus* who was next to him in power, but of a very different nature; the Government being changed, and the Community now under Conſuls.

It is true, there may be catalogues of ſingle Perſons ſucceeding one another in a Priority of Order as well as of Power: but this is nothing to our preſent caſe. Here are liſts before us, and all in them repreſented to be upon equall terms, as having a fruition of the ſame Immunities, and the firſt and laſt are confeſſed to have a Superiority of Power over their Colleagues, from whence a computation may be eaſily made, what we may conclude concerning the reſt. Thoſe who ſay, though the Apoſtles ſtand at the head of the Catalogues, yet they are not included in them, contradict the ſenſe of primitive Antiquity, which accounts all in the liſts to be Succeſſours to the Apoſtles. A Succeſſour & a Predeceſſour being relatives, which go always together, if the Succeſſour be in the roll, the Predeceſſour muſt neceſſarily be ſo. It will not be eaſie to diſappoint the prevalency

of this argument, if the Catalogues may be admitted as Authentick: and why they ſhould not, I ſee no juſt reaſon.

The variations in them are not uncapable of a reconciliation, and they argue ſtrongly that they are not the fictions of a private Invention. Forgeries uſe to be too harmonious and uniform in every *punctilio*. They were collected by a skilfull hand, who had great advantages to poſſeſs himſelf with the true ſenſe of the Monuments of Antiquity. His acknowledgement, ὐ ῥᾴδιον εἰπεῖν, that it was not eaſie to make ſome of them, is no diſcredit to their Authority. The difficulty in demonſtrating ſome propoſitions in *Euclide* is no juſt exception againſt their certainty. The Infallible Oracles are not without their δυσνόητα. They were ſo clear in *Irenæus*'s time, that he aſſerts, he was able to number the very Perſons which did lineally deſcend from the Apoſtles: and in *Tertullians*, that he challengeth the Hereticks to ſhew the like ſucceſſions. If they had been of a dubious Authority, it had not been agreeable to the prudence of thoſe learned Fathers to value the cauſe which they undertook to maintain, ſo much upon their account, as it is plain they did, to all who peruſe their writings.

Euſeb. L. 3. c. 4.

L. 3. c. 3.

It might be added as no prejudice to their Reputation, that they were begun by the Apoſtles themſelves, as is evident by *Clemens Romanus* in his Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*. In order to the quieting thoſe tumults which did occaſion his writing, he tells them, that the Apoſtles did underſtand by our Lord *Jeſus*, that there would be a contention περὶ ὀνόματος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς, *concerning the name or dignity of Epiſcopacy*; and therefore having a perfect foreſight, did conſtitute Biſhops and gave ἐπινομὴν or διατύπωσιν a roll or catalogue of ſome approved Perſons to ſucceed and execute their Office after their deceaſe.

P. 57. Patr. jun.

This teſtimony, as it aſſures us that the Catalogues we treat of, were begun by the Apoſtles: ſo likewiſe, that Biſhops in *Clemens*'s time, who lived within the intervall

under

under debate, were such as are properly so stiled; to wit, Persons vested in a Superiority over Elders. We never read of rolls or catalogues of meer Presbyters, as lineally deduced from the Apostles, considered in that state in which they died. Indeed *Irenæus* mentions the successions of Presbyters: but he who will give himself leasure to ponder the Context, will easily discern, that he means no others then Bishops, the promiscuous use of those words being not totally laid aside in his time. L. 3. c. 2. L. 4. c. 44.

If it should be granted, that he understands such as are now usually known by that Name, no prejudice would redound to our assertion. The Apostles may be considered in a twofold capacity; either as they were before the Resurrection, when they were ordained to Preach, but not to Rule: or after, when they were invested with their Episcopall Power. If Presbyters be represented as Successours to the Apostles in any ancient Record, the Apostles are considered in the first capacity, and not in the last, which *Clemens* speaks of. This is fully expressed by *Ignatius*, who asserts that the Bishop succeeds εἰς τοπον τοῦ Θεοῦ *in the place of Christ*, who is God, the Presbyters εἰς τόπον συνεδρίου τῶν Ἀποστόλων *in the place of the Bench of the Apostles*, namely, as they were when *Christ* was their Bishop upon earth, and they as Presbyters subject to his appointments, as their proper directory. *Epist. ad Mag.*

It is an ungrounded presumption, that *Clemens* by ἐπισκόπους. understands nothing but an Elder, because when he mentions the custom of the Apostles, which was to set apart τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν *their first fruits*, he names onely ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους as the product of their Ordination. These two words comprehend all who were concerned in the Primitive Government. The Apostles and Elders were Bishops, the Elders over the Laity, the Apostles over the Laity and Elders too. The Evangelists and those who did minister to the Elders were διάκονοι, the P. 54, 55.

the first to the primary Apostles, and are in the modern stile called suffragan Bishops; the second to the Presbyters, they upon all occasions helping them, as the Evangelists did the Apostles.

Stat. 26 Hen. 8. 14.

If the Canons of the Apostles, or *Ignatius* might be permitted to speak in this case, a sudden period would be put to this Controversie. And truely why a liberty of Speech should be denied to the first, seeing they say nothing in this particular, but what is incorporated into the Canons of Oecumenicall Synods, and was the practice of all subsequent Ages: or to the Second after so perspicuous and learned a vindication, as hath been lately made of his Authority, I see no reason at all.

Vindic. Epist. S. Igna.

S. *Ferom*, whom *Blondell* professeth to follow, if throughly considered, will be found to have no favourable aspect upon his opinion. All that he speaks, amounts to no more then this:

In Epist. ad Tit.

The Apostles and their Delegates during their abode in the world did hold the Government of the Church in their own hands. These in every City constituted Elders, which were promiscuously called by the name of Presbyters and Bishops to rule in a Subordination to themselves. As the primary Apostles, and those who were ordained by their Hands to succeed them, began to wear off, there sprang up a Schism among the People not much unlike unto that which disquieted the Church, when S. *Paul* wrote to the *Corinthians*, every one adhering to him as his Apostle or primary Bishop, by whom he had been baptized. *Unusquisque eos, quos baptizaverat, suos esse putabat.* The controversie was not, whether one should have the Power over them; (the practice of the Apostles in ordaining single Persons to succeed them, was so evidentiall and fresh in their memories, that there could be no hesitancy in that particular) but who was to be the Person. In order to the healing this Schism, *toto orbe decretum est*, it was universally decreed: (whereas before Presbyters did *communi consilio*

ſilio in a ſubordination to the Apoſtles govern the Church) that now One ſhould be choſen out of their own number, and have a Superintendency over the reſt, as the Apoſtles and their Delegates uſe to have. This is the ſum of what *Jerome* doth deſign.

The Perſon thus ſet over had not onely the πρωτοκαθεδρία, *but a Primacy of Juriſdiction.* For before this change in the College of the Presbyters there muſt neceſſarily be One, who in the abſence of the Apoſtles had *jus primæ Cathedræ.* This is eſſentiall to all regular Conventions, no Order can be maintained without it: therefore by this new Decree ſomething being conferred, which none of the Presbyters did enjoy before, it can be nothing but *primatus juriſdictionis.*

This Conſtitution was made long before the fortieth year of the ſecond Century. S. *Jerome* calls it an Apoſtolicall tradition, which cannot be true in any proper ſenſe, except it began in the age, in which the Apoſtles lived: and as an evidence of his mind, that he did not ſpeak improperly, he gives an example of the practiſe of it in the Church of *Alexandria*, from the death of S. *Mark*, which was in the eighth Year of *Nero*, above ſeventy Years before *Blondells æra.* *Epiſt.* 85. Evagrio.

If *Blondels* Apology had been permitted to ſee the light with that concluſion which he himſelf put to it, we ſhould have needed no other refutation of his Opinion. For there he did acknowledge Epiſcopacy to be an Apoſtolicall Conſtitution, which he could not with reaſon have aſſerted, except he had believed, that its *Epocha* was higher, and more early then the fortieth Year of the ſecond Century. Durell *Apen.* p. 339.

In order to the overthrow of the Univerſality of Prelacy, it is uſually alledged, that the *Gothick* Churches were governed without it for ſeventy Years till *Ulphilas*'s time: The *Scottiſh* by the *Culdei*, who were Presbyters onely till *Palladius*: that the tranſmarine Churches, which are reformed

formed according to the primitive Standard, are now without it: and laſtly that the Hierarchy amongſt us is not the ſame with primitive Epiſcopacy.

Ex lib. 2. parag. 5. p. 470. Valeſ. For the firſt the beſt Authority we have is *Philoſtorgius*, whoſe words when ſummed up, will amount to no more then this: That the *Goths* made an inrode upon ſome places in *Europe* and *Aſia*, where Chriſtianity was planted, and took many captives, amongſt which were ſome of the Clergy. Theſe being mingled in their converſe with that barbarous People, were inſtrumentall to convert them to the Faith of *Chriſt*, and governed them till *Ulphila's* time their firſt Biſhop.

In all this there is nothing really prejudiciall to our Poſition. It doth not appear, that theſe Presbyters did all this while any thing which was peculiar to a Biſhop. When any of them died, new ones might be ordained by ſome neighbour Prelate. However the matter went, (of which we have but a very defective account, by reaſon of the paucity of Records) the deportment of a few Captives in a caſe of neceſſity, can be of no ſuch Authority as to prejudice the Univerſality of Eccleſiaſticall practice. It would be but a weak argument to prove, that the Laws of *Moſes* were not univerſally owned by the *Jews*; becauſe during their ſeventy years Captivity, they were forced to forbear the practice of ſome of them, as not reconcileable with the circumſtances of Exile.

As for the *Scottiſh* Church thoſe which report the matter, ſpeak nothing which may be a diſſervice to our Aſſertion. The ſum is, that many of the *Britains*, who embraced Chriſtianity, fearing the cruelty of *Dioclefian*, fled into *Scotland*; where by their ſolitary and pious life they did commend themſelves in ſuch a degree to the opinion of that Nation, that they were uſually called *Culdei*, that is *Cultores Dei*, *Worſhippers of God*. Theſe choſe a Perſon out of their own number to govern them in their Divine

Primor. Brit. Ecc. p. 638. p. 640.

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Concernments. Here is plainly a Bishop elected onely by his Clergy, who notwithstanding any thing in the Record, might receive his Consecration by some duly qualified in our Nation, where Hierarchy was undoubtedly settled before this period. If any formality was wanting in him, the defect is not to be charged upon their wills, but necessity, as appears by the ready entertainment *Palladius* found amongst them, who wanted no formality which the Bishop of *Rome* could conferr upon him.

As for the transmarine Churches which are of the Reformation, it is very well known, that all of them are not without Episcopacy, as in *Denmark*, *Norwey*, *Sweden*, *Germany*. Those which are, alledge necessity as the reason of their first Constitution. The Reformation being begun amongst them, not by Bishops, but the Laity and inferior Clergy onely, there was good cause to believe, if they had set up Bishop against Bishop in the same City, the result would have been nothing but confusion, and sanguinary contests, which have no propitious aspect upon the design of the Gospel. The duty of avoiding these mischiefs being grounded upon a natural precept, the form of Government upon a positive, they did presume, it was not the will of the Lawgiver, that the positive Injunction should oblige them in those circumstances; but rather yield and give place to the superior Command.

This necessity which was the ground of their constitution, they have pathetically desired the removal of, and that their condition might become reconcileable with the introduction of an Imparity. When one of the Prelates of our Church at the Synod of *Dort* had represented Episcopacy as a fit expedient for the suppression of Schism and Heresie, the answer of the President in the name of the whole Assembly is very well known, *Domine, non sumus adeò felices.* Dur. 118.

Lastly, where the first reason hath failed, and the Bishop

of the place been converted to the reformed Religion, there they have put their desires into execution, and expressed a readiness to submit to his Regiment, as is manifest by the Dur. p 120. deportment of the Protestants in the Province of *Campagne* towards the Bishop of *Troyes*, when he renounced the Church of *Rome*, and professed an adherence to the reformed Religion.

Those who affirm the present Hierarchy not to be the same with primitive Episcopacy must make the difference either rationall, modall, or essentiall. A difference of reason being the contrivance of imagination is not materiall in the present Debate. A modall (considering the various condition of Times, the Church in the Apostolicall age being under affliction, now in prosperity, then under Heathen Princes, now under Christian, then seperated from the civil Community, now incorporated into it) may be admitted without any prejudice to our Assertion. Some variation in the exercise of Jurisdiction, the quality of Instruments doth not alter the nature of Government. As the civil Regiment is not changed, when a Prince makes an Ecclesiasticall Person his Chancellour: so neither is the Ecclesiasticall, when a Bishop constitutes a Civil. In the age in which the Church began to have her ἐκκλησιαστικὰ διάκονοι which were persons of the same Moment, designed to expedite matters which might be too great an avocation from religious Worship, to which the Clergy are principally devoted; she did not dream of any diversity from the Primitive Government, but continued with the same degree of confidence, to stile her Bishops the Apostles successours. These civil Helps did make them no more different from what they were before, then a staff in the hand of a man makes him distinct from himself, when he hath none in it. As for an essentiall difference, those who are most inquisitive, will never be able to discover any. Primitive Episcopacy was nothing but the regiment of Churches within a certain

certain precinct committed to one ſingle Perſon with a ſufficient Authority as well over the Clergy as Laity. Juriſdiction in an Apoſtle was authoritative; In the Elders concomitant and ſubordinate. Prelacy now in the ſubſtance of it is of the ſame importance. Thoſe acceſſions with which it is beautified, and raiſed above the reach of vulgar Contempt by the munificence of Princes, do no more make it of a different *ſpecies* from what it was in the Apoſtolicall age, then *the royall apparel put upon Mordecai* did conſtitute him a man ſpecifically diſtinct from him, who uſe *to ſit in the gate*: *Moſes* when advanced *in Pharaohs Court*, was the ſame perſon with him who was expoſed *in the Ark of Bulruſhes*. A child when dreſſed by the nurſe, is the ſame with that which was born naked. The ornamentall favours of Kings and Queens, which are *nurſing Fathers and Mothers* to the Church, make no greater an alteration.

Thoſe who endeavour to demonſtrate an Eſſentiall difference by aſſerting that Biſhops and Presbyters had the ſame Ordination in the Apoſtolicall age, and by conſequence were then of the ſame Order, whereas now it is otherwiſe; will find reaſon to alter their thoughts, and to believe, that the Ordination then was as diſtinct as it is now, if they pleaſe to take theſe few ſteps.

The names, Biſhop, Presbyter and Deacon, in Scripture are ambulatory, and not always confined to the ſame order of men. Thoſe who have attempted to evidence, that the word Presbyter ſignifies always a Biſhop, or the word Biſhop a Presbyter, have been more curious then really advantagious to their own cauſe.

The Characteriſticall names of the ſuperior Clergy are Apoſtles, Prophets, Evangeliſts. The primary Governours were known by the firſt, their Suffragans and Coadjutors by the two laſt; yet ſo as by reaſon of their being inveſted in a Power, whereby they were inabled to do what a primary Apoſtle might, they are likewiſe frequently ſti-

led Apoſtles. Upon this account we read of the Apoſtles of the Churches, 2 *Cor.* 8. 23. *Epaphroditus* is ſtiled an Apoſtle of the *Philippians* c. 2. v. 25. *Andronicus* and *Junias* are ſaid to be of note among the Apoſtles, *Rom.* 16. v. 7. *Euſebius* ſays, that beſides the twelve, there were many others who were called by that name. For this reaſon S. *Mark*, *Luke*, *Philemon*, *Titus* and *Timothy* have this title in the Greek Menology.

L. 1. Ecc. H. c. 12.

Valeſ. in Euſ. H. tom. 1. p. 21.

Theſe had a juriſdiction over Presbyters. *Timothy* was veſted in a power to convent an Elder, and receive an accuſation againſt him: but we never read of any ſuch Power in an Elder over an Evangeliſt, or an Apoſtle.

This Power was not arbitrary and aſſumed at pleaſure, but communicated to them by Commiſſion. The Apoſtles did nothing in a tumultuary way, but were agreeable in their practice to that pattern and order, which they had received.

This Commiſſion was given at their Ordination. This was the uſuall way in the Synagogue, whereby any were admitted to a participation of the Government: and we read of no other in the Church. Therefore when S. *Paul* writes to *Timothy* how to govern, he puts him in mind of the gift, which he received at *the laying on of hands*, διὰ τροχειρίαν τῆς ἐκκλησίας as the Greek Scholiaſt ſpeaks: which plainly intimates, that his gift or faculty to ſuperintend did not derive its originall from any Commiſſion, but what he received by the impoſition of Hands.

1 Tim. 4. 14.

Now if their Power was diſtinct, their power by Commiſſion, their commiſſion by Ordination, the rules of diſcourſe will oblige us to conclude, that their Ordination was diſtinct; the ſame Ordination cannot produce two different Powers.

Upon this account we find the Apoſtles, who were at firſt ordained by *Jeſus Chriſt to preach the Goſpel*, *Mark* 3. 14. when they came to be inveſted with the Government and

and sit upon their thrones were ordained anew, *Joh.* 20. *v.* 21. *Matthias* and *Barnabas* two of the Seventy and by consequence set apart before, *Luke* 10. *v.* 1. were consecrated again, when they were made Apostles, *Acts* 1. *v.* 22, 26. *c.* 13. *v.* 3. *Stephen*, *Philip*, *Prochorus*, *Nicanor*, &c. if we may give credit to *Epiphanius*, were of the same number; and yet when they were made Suffragans to the Apostles, they had a new *imposition of hands*, *Acts* 6. *v.* 6. There is some reason to believe that *Timothy* himself was twice Ordained.

Euf. H. *l.* 1. 12.

Adver. Hær. l. 1. *p.* 50. *par.*

The first time, about the seventh Year of *Claudius* by the Apostles own hands, immediately after he had circumcised him. For his design being to take him along with him to preach the Gospel, no doubt as he circumcised him, that he might not offend the *Jews*: so he ordained him, that he might not offend God, in breaking his Law. No man *taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God*, as was *Aaron*. Of this we have mention, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. *Stir up the gift of God, which is given thee by the laying on of my hands.*

The second time, about the thirteenth Year of *Claudius*, when he was left at *Ephesus* to be Bishop there. When the Apostle writes to him, how to behave himself in that Church, he puts him in mind of the gift or faculty which he received at his Consecration. *Neglect not the gift, which was given by Prophesie, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. These words import an Ordination distinct from the former; for that was made διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως, *&c. by the laying on of the Apostles hands alone*: This διὰ προφητείας μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως, *by a Prophet or Prophets accompanied in the imposition of hands by other Bishops.* As πρεσβυτέριον is put for πρεσβύτεροι, that is ἐπίσκοποι, as *Chrysostome*, *Oecumenius* and *Theophilact* expound it, and confirm their gloss with this reason οὐ γὰρ δὴ πρεσβύτεροι τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἐχειροτόνουν· so προφητεία *for Prophets*. The Helle-

Hellenisticall stile, in which the New Testament was written, is no stranger to this signification. Ἔγειρον προφήτας ἐν ὀνόματι σου, *raise up Prophets in thy name*, *Eccles.* c. 36. v. 14. διάδοχος Μωϋσῆ ἐν προφητείαις, the vulgar Lat. renders *successor Mosis in Prophetis*. 46. 1. As S. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were at *Antioch* ordained by Prophets and other Bishops, so was *Timothy* in the Church of *Ephesus*. If the word προφητείαις did onely import a prediction of his aptitude to execute this Sacred Function, the Preposition διὰ would not have been joined with it, but ἐπὶ, as in the 1 *Tim.* 1. *v.* 18. *Timothy* being young, and by consequence wanting the circumstance of Age to commend him to this grave and ponderous Imployment: The Prophet or Prophets, who foretold his fitness for it, and the felicity of the Church under his Superintendency; that they might farther contribute to her assurance, were mingled with the rest of his Ordainers in the imposition of hands.

Acts 13. v. 1, 2, 3.

All this may give us some competent assurance of the Practice of the universall Church. From this practice the deduction of the Divine pleasure concerning the perpetuity of this Government will be very familiar and easie. It cannot be imagined, that it should have so universall an entertainment in all Places, where there was no Oecumenicall Council to command it, no secular Power to enforce it, no want of Pride and Ambition to controul it, had it not been commended to their reception, and made currant by a Divine Signature. No arbitrary contrivance checked with difficulties, and destitute of all externall advantages to promote the Propagation of it, ever found so sudden, uniform, and generall an Establishment. Had it been a Usurpation upon the rights and immunities of Presbyters (it being in matter not latent, but apert and manifest) no doubt some would have been so just to themselves, as to have stood up in their own Defence: and so zealous, as to have encountered it with a direct opposition: yet we read nothing

nothing of this nature, till three hundred Years after in *Arius*'s time; and then all the recompence which he received was the infamy of Hereſie. Hereſie being an errour in the Foundation, and the ſoundation being incluſive of that which relates to Practice and Government, as well as Doctrine, (in Religious government as well as Civil there is ſomething which is Fundamentall) he advancing an opinion diametrically oppoſite to what was then reputed the *baſis* of Eccleſiaſticall Policy, did take a compendious courſe to expoſe himſelf to this imputation. His ſeparation from the Communion of the Church was not the reaſon of this charge, that being, if we may be allowed to ſpeak properly, Schiſm and not Hereſie. Nor his Arianiſm. S. *Auſtin* and *Epiphanius* aſſign him in their Catalogues a place diſtinct from that, which is appropriated to *Arius*. And it will be difficult to find a more authentick Teſtimony for the identity of their Hereſie, than thoſe two have given for the diverſity.

Had the Epiſcopall Conſtitution been in any reſpect a defection from the inſtitution of the Apoſtles, how comes it to paſs that they themſelves ſhould give countenance to it, by the performance of many acts peculiar to a Prelate, as hath been already declared? If their practice was not deſigned for imitation, how came the beſt of Men in the ſecond and third Century not to underſtand ſo much, but fall ſo roundly to a Conformity, and without the leaſt heſitancy ſtile their Biſhops the Apoſtles Succeſſours, as moſt evidently appears by *Irenæus* and *Tertullian*? *Adv. Hær. l.3. c.3. de præſ. c. 32.*

Though a deſire to prove a Succeſſion in Apoſtolicall doctrine gave occaſion for what they aſſert in this particular: yet upon this occaſion they plainly own a Succeſſion in Power and Authority. *Irenæus* proves that the Apoſtles would not conceal any of the Myſteries of Chriſtian Religion from them, becauſe they left them to be their Succeſſours, *ſuum ipſorum locum magiſterii tradentes*, delivering

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to them the same Power & Authority they themselves had. It will hardly gain belief in the thoughts of those who are acquainted with the consequences of Reason; that they who made it their election to endure the greatest torments, rather then to violate the least of the Precepts of *Christ*, should so soon as He and his Apostles had left the World, erect a government contrary to his Institution: that those who were willing to die for the Mystery of Godliness, should make it their choice to live under a branch of the Mystery of Iniquity. I know the *Israelites* in a short time in the absence of *Moses*, and after the death of *Joshua*, made a notorious revolt; yet this is no argument, that these pious and holy Men did the same after the death of the Apostles. What the *Israelites* did, was known to be a defection, because it was opposite to the practice of *Moses* and *Joshua*, and encountred with opposition from the Best of men then living. But this which some think fit to stile a defection in the Primitive Christians, is exactly conformable to Apostolicall practice, and was submitted to by those heroick Spirits, who by Martyrdom gave the World an undoubted assurance of their Sincerity and Goodness. If the practice of the universall Church must be totally set aside as a matter of no consideration in order to the conducting of us into an understanding of the Mind of God, one pillar of our Belief will be very much shaken: I mean the Authority of some particular Books of Holy Writ, for the knowledge of which we are without controversie in no mean degree indebted to it. No small diminution will be made in our assurance, that *Clemens*'s Epistle to the *Corinthians* is no part of the Canon, and that S. *Paul*'s is: that *Ecclesiasticus* is *Apocryphall*, and *Ecclesiastes* not. If custom be of no signification, it is strange that S. *Paul* should appeal to it, as no unfit Arbitrator to put a period to those contentions which did molest the Church, 1 *Cor.* 11. 16.

Indeed it is said, that of whatsoever consequence it may be

be in other cases, yet in this before us it cannot be safe to deduce the Divine Will from it; because those who were ingaged in it, did not look upon themselves as obliged thereunto by any Divine Precept; but on the contrary by enlarging the Church's power as the Churches did enlarge, by conforming Ecclesiasticall Government to the Civil, by managing Spirituall concerns according to the Canons of Synods, by acknowledging a Subordination to the civil Power, they did manifest that they were acted, not by the influence of a Supernall command, but by some occasionall and prudentiall considerations.

To all which I reply in order. 1. The Regiment we contend for, was universally acknowledged to have its *basis* in a Divine right, as most evidently appears by the twenty ninth Canon of the fourth generall Council, τὸν ἐπίσκοπον εἰς τὸν βαθμὸν πρεσβυτέρου φέρειν ἱεροσυλία ἔστι, *to depress a Bishop down to the degree of a Presbyter is Sacriledge.* It will be very difficult to explain how the Synod could pronounce this to be sacrilegious, except there was a generall belief, that the difference betwixt a Bishop and a Presbyter was made by a Sacred Institution. Upon this account the Author of the Book of Questions in S. *Austin* affirms *Nemo ignorat, &c.* no man is so ignorant, but he knows that our Saviour appointed Bishops over Churches, for before his Ascension into Heaven, he putting his hands upon the Apostles, ordained them to be Bishops. S. *Cyprians* words are of the same importance, *Lege divina fundatum, &c.* it is founded upon a divine Law; that every act of the Church should be governed by Bishops. *Apostolos, id est, Episcopos & Præpositos Dominus elegit,* Our Lord hath chosen Apostles, that is, Bishops and Church-governours. This is the reason why Prelates in after-ages are sometimes stiled Apostles, as *Epiphanius* in the epistle of *Acacius* and *Paulus*, and *Athanasius* in the *Coptick* Calendar. This name was used with a design to preserve the memory

Qua. vet. & Nov. Test. Q. 97. tom. 4. p. 775. Frob.

Epist. 27.

Epist. 65.

Tom. 1. Petav. Seld. de Syned. l. 3. c. 15.

of the Primitive Inſtitution.

2. The enlarging Church-power as the Church did encreaſe, is no argument againſt the Divine right of it. By the ſame reaſon we may prove, that the power of a Father of a family hath not its foundation in a Divine Law; becauſe it receives an augmentation, as his Children encreaſe, and falls under divers Modifications, according to the various Stations they are placed in: or that the Theocracy recorded in the Old Teſtament did not derive its originall from Heaven, becauſe it was of a larger extent, when the People of *Iſrael* were ſettled in their apartments in the land of *Canaan*, then when they lived in the wilderneſs altogether.

3. The conforming Eccleſiaſticall Government to the Civil is no juſt preſumption againſt a Divine originall. It doth not appear but that it was the Will of God, that the New *Jeruſalem* which came down from Heaven, ſhould conform it ſelf to the mould it fell into. When the Church was firſt planted, it found the world cantoned into Provinces: in every Province a Metropolis, inferior Cities, ſuburbicarian Regions: in every Metropolis a Proconſul, in every City a Defenſor upon which the ſuburbicarian Regions did depend. The imitation of this civil Diſpoſition in placing a Biſhop in every City anſwerable to the Defenſor, in every Metropolis an Arch-Biſhop ſutable to the Proconſul, being of eminent uſe to invite the People to a ready obedience (they being by cuſtom habituated to the like Regiment in civil concernments) and likewiſe giving the Governours a ſingular advantage to obtain the ends of their Conſtitution, by reaſon of the daily confluences to thoſe Places upon ſecular accounts, there is a high degree of probability, that it was ſutable to the will of him whoſe conſtitutions are always conformable to the deepeſt reaſon. Some footſteps of it we find as early as the New Teſtament. Churches were planted in Metropoles, as *Corinth*, *Theſſalonica*, *Antioch*, upon which thoſe who in any part

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of the Province entertained the belief of the Gospel, had some dependence. The second Epistle to the *Corinthians* is inscribed to all the Saints which are in all *Achaia*. The first to the *Thessalonians* hath a peculiar aspect upon all in *Macedonia*. The letter of the Apostles and Elders to *Antioch* is directed to the Brethren in *Syria* and *Silicia*: *Achaia* being the Province of *Corinth*, *Macedonia* of *Thessalonica*, *Syria* and *Silicia* of *Antioch*. Why these Epistles sent to the Metropolis about Ecclesiasticall matters should be inscribed to all in any part of the Province, and no other (though all the Scripture was written for our learning) there must be some peculiar reason: and none can be rendred more congruous than this, that all Christians in every part of it, whether Cities or suburbicarian Regions did depend upon the Metropolis in point of Government. As the *Romans* when they subdued a Country by force of Arms, did constitute there a civil Province: so the Apostles, when they had made a Spirituall conquest by the weapons of their warfare, an Ecclesiasticall. Therefore S. *Peter*, when he writes to the converted in the dispersion, directs his Epistle to them in their distinct Provinces, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Asia*, *Bithynia*. And when S. *Paul* mentions the contribution of the Churches, he characterizeth them by the name of their Provinces, where their abode was. *It hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia*, *Rom.* 15. 26. *Achaia was ready a year ago*, 2 *Cor.* 9. 2. This *hypothesis* gives the most intelligible account, why all the Churches in *Asia* are reduced to seven: No doubt there were more congregations within that compass. All *that dwelt in Asia, are said to hear the Word of the Lord*; and the Preachers were S. *John* and S. *Paul*, who were endued with a power of working Miracles, and spake in the demonstration of the Divine Spirit. The Cities from which these Churches had their denomination being Metroples, upon which the lesser with the suburbicarian Regions did depend in point

c. 3. 10.

Rom. 15. 4.

Acts 19. v. 10.

of Government, and make but one Community; the Churches in them, and in the Metropolis ſymbolizing with this temper in the State, are repreſented but as one Church. That the immunities of a Metropolis did belong to *Epheſus*, *Smyrna*, *Sardis*, *Pergamos*, *Laodicea*, is aſſerted by *Pliny*; to *Thyatira* by *Ptolomy*, to *Philadelphia* by the Greek Acts of the Council of *Conſtantinople* under *Mennas*. Though *Pliny* doth not attribute this honour to *Thyatira*, yet he doth not deny it. The defect of his teſtimony is fully ſupplyed by *Ptolomy*, who is not his inferior in point of Authority. *Philadelphia*'s being placed in the *Notitia* under *Sardis* is no demonſtration that it was not a Mother-city. The ſame individuall may be a Mother in one reſpect, and a Daughter in another. The Provinces themſelves were not all equall, and by conſequence the Mother-city in one Province might be inferior in dignity and dependent in power upon the Metropolis of another. We need go no further for an inſtance then our own Nation. Of the two Provinces into which it is divided, one is acknowledged to have a Superiority, and ſome power over the other.

Nat. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 29. c. 30. Pto. Geo. l. 5. c. 2.

Aſſio quinta Orig of Metropolitans p. 69.

All this makes it appear, that the conforming Eccleſiaſticall Government to the Civil is no prejudice to the Divine originall of it. The Vine which was planted by a Divine hand under the civil Power as a wall of defence, did naturally, according to the will of Him who planted it, adapt it ſelf to the mode of that which it grew againſt. The rain which deſcends from Heaven, conforms to the figure of the veſſel it falls into.

4. Eccleſiaſticall concerns were managed according to the decrees of Councils, but not all of them. The ancient Church was governed by a double rule, the Canon of Scripture and of Councils. The laſt conſiſts either of declarations of what is contained in Scripture: or elſe conſtitutions to reſtrain liberty in thoſe things which the Sacred O-

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racles have left to our choice, either to do or not to do. As for Prelacy, (the essence of which lies in a Superiority of an Ecclesiasticall person over Elders within a certain precinct) it was ever owned by the Church as agreeable to the Canon of Scripture. Councils suppose it to be grounded upon a right more early then themselves, and never give it a place in the Catalogue of those things which may be or not be the object of their determination. He who thinks fit to consult the Code of the universall Church, cannot remain unacquainted with the truth of this Assertion.

5. The Churches acknowledgement of her subordination to the civil Power is reconcileable with a belief that her Government is grounded upon a Divine Right. Oeconomicall Regiment, which doth undoubtedly derive its origen from Heaven, is in the exercise of it subordinate to the civil Power. A Father of a family, though he governs his progeny by vertue of the law of God, yet is accountable to his Prince, and limitable by his decrees in the execution of his Authority. The Churches being stiled a family will Eph. 3. 15. justifie the congruity of this example. The supream Rector hath moulded the Universe into Communities, and constituted the civil Magistrate to be their Guardian. Into these Communities he hath let down from Heaven the New Jerusalem, namely, a Church or Ecclesiasticall Society with Governours and Laws not onely harmless and inoffensive, but singularly advantageous to the purposes of the civil Constitution. And because it is not impossible but that the Rulers may degenerate from the true meaning of their Originall, and under a pretence of a Supernall commission undermine the interest of the civil Community, the Magistrate is impowered to see that they keep within their own bounds, and if they swell above their banks, to remand them into their proper channel, if they do not, to protect and defend them against the hand of violence. This makes it evident, how the Church may

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be ſubordinate to the ſecular Power, and yet have a Government grounded upon a Divine right. It is the Divine pleaſure, that Princes within their own Territories ſhould be ſo far concerned in all cauſes and over all perſons, as to ſee that nothing be done to the prejudice of the Community they are ſet over. From hence doth emerge their right to inhibit, limit, and regulate the execution. Though Chriſt is the immediate Fountain of the Power, yet they have a commanding influence upon the ſtreams which flow from it. Though they may not invade the Offices which are peculiar to the Church, yet they are obliged to ſee that they are duly performed by thoſe to whom they appertain. Though they have not the Power of the Keys; yet in caſe thoſe which have, make uſe of them to open a door to Sedition and Diſorder, they have the Power of the Sword to ſhut it, and prevent the miſchief. If the Church keep within her due bounds, and the ſupream Magiſtrate be of opinion that ſhe doth not, and from hence a conteſt is commenced, ſhe hath no other weapon to defend her ſelf but Prayer and a compoſed Submiſſion to what the preſervation of a good conſcience may expoſe her.

All this is very far from erecting *imperium in imperio*: it hath nothing in it of a malevolent aſpect upon the Supremacy of Princes. All pretended inconveniences fall with an equall weight upon paternall Government, which undoubtedly, being in nature and time antecedent to the civil Conſtitution, muſt have a Divine originall.

And now whoſoever pleaſes to look back and conſider the reaſon of the thing, the declaration of God, the practice of the Univerſall Church, which is no bad commentary upon what is dubious in any Divine appointment, will be under no temptation from any rationall inducement to believe, that the Apoſtolicall authority to govern was adapted onely to the Primitive times, and not intended to continue in all Ages.

So

So much of the Remedy in generall, namely an Apoſtolicall or Epiſcopall Authority, expreſſed in *viſiting the Brethren*. In the next place I will enumerate ſome particular acts of this Power, which are of eminent uſe in all Ages for the preventing and healing diſtempers. 1. An Inſpection into the Authority of thoſe who preach. 2. The Doctrine. 3. The lives. 4. The giving rules for the preſerving of Order. 5. The cenſuring thoſe who neglect the Order which is agreed upon.

1. An Inſpection into the Authority of thoſe who preach. The work of the Miniſtry is of greater importance than to lie open to every one, who by the ſtrength of his fancy can perſwade himſelf that he is fit to diſcharge it. The peace of the Church depends upon the Practice of thoſe who are members of it; their practice upon their judgement: their judgement upon the Doctrine of their Teachers. Theſe have the Helm in their hand, whereby the body of the People is eaſily moved: the Key of Knowledge, whereby they are in the neareſt capacity to open the intellect, and let in, or ſhut out Principles which tend to Unity. The Community would not enjoy the leaſt degree of ſecurity, might the private opinion of every Perſon concerning his own Aptitude give him a title to this Office. Men are not competent Judges of their own abilities. The Generality are very partiall, when they take an eſtimate of their intellectuall Powers. Every place is filled with complaints of the want of Riches and Honour: but we ſeldom meet with any querulous reſentments of the defects of Reaſon and Underſtanding. Indeed S. *Paul* ſaid, *who is ſufficient for theſe things?* but we are apt to ſay, *who is not?* The ſtream runs the faſteſt, where the channel is moſt ſhallow: Thoſe are moſt forward, who have the leaſt acquaintance with the depth of Knowledge. The few exceptions from the generall Rule, which are duly prepared, are ſo much under the command of humility, that they judge

judge themselves unworthy. The burden of fruit which grows upon these branches, bends them into too low and dispondent thoughts of themselves. When *Ammonius*, Socr. *Hist.* l. 4. c. 18. ἀνὴρ δαυμάσιος, as he is stiled by *Socrates*, was acquainted with a resolution in others to compell him to take upon him the most Sacred office in the Church, he cut off his right ear, ὅπως ἂν τῷ ἀχρήμῳ τοῦ σώματος τὴν χειροτονίαν ἐκφύγῃ, that the deformity of his body might be a Socr. *Hist.* l. 7. c. 12. bar to his Consecration. *Chrysanthus*, a person eminent for wisdom and sobriety, when he was solicited to take upon him the same Function, was so much under the power of modesty, that he fled from *Constantinople* into *Bythinia*, where he concealed himself with a design to decline it. By reason of this unfitness in Men to judge for themselves, and to be the fountain of their own Authority, God hath endued the Governours of his Church with a power, as to Ordain, so to examine every mans pretence; that the Community may receive no damage.

2. The Doctrine. Those who have a good commission may exceed the bounds of it: and in stead of feeding their Flock in wholsom Pastures, lead them into Boggs, where they will inevitably sink into an eternall Perdition. Error is damnable as well as vice. All the difference is, this is the more open rode: that the more concealed and private way to Hell. The Apostle saies, that he which is engaged Tit 3. 11. in it ἐξέστραπται is overturned as a ship, when the Keil is uppermost. As the man of sin who sits in the Temple of God, and under a pretence of Religion vents that which 2 Thess. 2. 3. tends to the overthrow of it, is stiled υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, *the son of perdition*: so error, which enthrones it self in the conscience, and sits there with a pretence of a descent from Heaven, αἱρέσεις ἀπωλείας. There is no perdition more cer- 2 Pet. 2. 1. tain, and less apt to meet with disappointment, then that which is secured from a disclosure by so plausible a cover as Religion and Divine approbation.

Errour

Errour puts the higheſt of affronts upon the Divine Majeſty. *He that believeth not, maketh him a liar.* It imports an *Hyperbole* of ingratitude. God having enobled us above his other creatures, and placed the difference in Reaſon and Underſtanding, if we keep not this conformable to him, but ſuffer it to be imbaſed with ſentiments which are repugnant to that eternall Reaſon which is in the Divine Intellect, we are unthankfull to him in the moſt exalted degree. There is no excuſe of importance enough to acquit us from guilt, the fault originally emerging from the voluntary and uncompelled motions of the Will. God hath made a plentifull proviſion for our Information. The holy Scripture is a perfect Digeſt of the divine Pleaſure, ſufficient to inſtruct even the Man of God in the concerns of Salvation. Therefore in caſe he errs about propoſitions of Divinity, he hath nothing to charge but his own will, in whoſe power it was to have ſuſpended his aſſent, and continued the inquiry, till he had been diſintangled and got looſe from all objections. When any object gains ſuch a degree of clarity, there is no fear of deception. We have a ſecurity from the ſupream Veracity, with which it is not conſiſtent, that our perceptive faculty ſhould be ſo formed, as to be impoſed upon, when the object is perſpicuous.

Error having ſo pernicious and malevolent an aſpect upon that end for which the Church is conſtituted, our Bleſſed Lord hath left a Power with it ἐπιτιμᾶν to ſtop the mouths of thoſe who are Propagatours of it. Tit. 1. 11.

If any pretend that they cannot alter their Intellects at pleaſure: yet they muſt confeſs, that they have a Power to lay a reſtraint upon their ſpeech, and comply with S. *Pauls* rule, *haſt thou Faith, have it to thy ſelf.* The peace of the Church being more valuable then any private Sentiment, it cannot but be a duty to ſuppreſs it, when the publication will certainly hazard the loſs of that Peace.

3. The lives. Thoſe who are Orthodox in their doctrine,

may be unorthodox in their converſation. Like *Penelope*, what they do in the day, they may undo at night in the works of darkneſs. *Theophylact* in his Commentary upon this Text, *he opened his mouth and taught*, *Mat.* 5. 2. makes a query, whether the firſt words be not ſuperfluous. Διὰ τί περσκεπται, τὸ ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα, φαίνεται, ὅτι περιττὸν ἦν. He anſwers, No, becauſe he did teach, when he did not open his mouth, namely, ἀλλὰ τῷ βίῳ by his life. There is a preaching in Life, as well as in Doctrine. If Religion be taught by the laſt, and debauchery by the firſt, actions having an aptitude to make a deeper impreſſion than words, there is ſome probability, they may prevail, and diſappoint the end of what is ſpoken. Though the unworthineſs of a Miniſter doth not make void his Calling, and diſoblige us from uſing his Miniſtry, he ſpeaking not in his own, but in the Name of Chriſt: and the efficacy of his Function depending not upon his dignity, but the energy of Divine Grace: (A vineyard may be watered with a pipe of lead as well as of ſilver. Seed may grow, although ſown by an impure hand. A ſeal of Braſs may make as fair an impreſſion as one of Gold.) Yet notwithſtanding, when this Sacred Office is imbarked in ſuch a veſſel, it is liable to meet with many *remora's*, before it can arrive at its proper haven, namely, the Conſcience. The Didacticall part of the diſcourſe of ſuch a Perſon, though never ſo cogent, is uſually entertained by all vulgar Capacities, who more conſider, what he is that ſpeaks, then what is ſpoken, with the ſame reſentment that a Jewel is which is found in the dirt: The feculent matter about it communicates a diſcredit to it, and conceals the true value from all but a few Artiſts. When one of a bad life had given excellent counſell to the *Lacedæmonians* about their Commonwealth, his improbity did ſo much diſparage the advice, though abſolutely neceſſary, that it might not be permitted to paſs into a Law as it came from him: but one eminently

Art. vel. 26.

Gell. *noct. Att. l.* 18. *c.* 3.

nently vertuous, though of no good Elocution, was desired to speak the same thing in such words as he could, and then unanimously as from him the stamp of Authority was impressed upon it. What *Ignatius* speaks of the Bishop of *Philadelphia*, σιγῶν πλέον δύναται τοῦ πλέον λαλούντων, is very applicable here. A good man, when silent, can do more than he who is bad, although he speak in a Stile enameled with the richest Tropes and Figures in Rhetorick.

As the Didacticall part of his discourse is apt to be neglected, so the Elenctical will in all probability be treated with scorn and contempt. To reprove is an act which savours of Authority, and no man can abide that another should exercise Authority over him in that thing in which they are both equall. If reprehension doth any good, it produceth sorrow in him who is the object of it. The pleasure which hearers take to consider that he which speaks lies under the same guilt which he reproves in them, prevents all pensive reflexions. Grief and delight are not at the same time reconcileable in the same subject. Men by a naturall temperament are disposed to put the most favourable construction upon their own actions. Reproof bearing a direct opposition to this inclination, is generally entertained with distast. Upon this account he which is concerned, in stead of being meliorated by it, is under strong temptations from his vindicative appetite to meditate and contrive revenge. Therefore if he which gave it, be not fenced with iron, and fortified with an impenetrable innocence, the son of *Belial* will be sure to invade him, and draw his arrows so deep, as not onely to wound him, but likewise through his sides that Sacred Function which he hath taken upon him.

These mischiefs coming to the Church by a bad life, the Governours are endued with an Authority to inquire as into the Commission and Doctrine, so likewise into the lives

of those who are the objects of their Inspection; that by their pious admonitions and paternall censures, they may regulate and amend what is enormous. The not exerting this power was the sin of *Eli* the High Priest. When *Hophni* and *Phineas* by their licentious deportment had made themselves vile, or as it is in the Hebrew accursed, that is liable to the חרם or curse which use to pass upon those who were excommunicated, *Nehem.* 13. 25. he as the High Priest did neglect to discharge his duty, and restrain them from coming to the publick Congregation. His private correption recorded, 1 *Sam.* 2. 23. is so full and emphaticall, that no defect discovers it self to the most piercing and criticall Eye.

This is the Power which S. *Paul* used in delivering the incestuous *Corinthian* to Satan. The Greek Interpreters believe that he was one of the Teachers of that Church. He being a leader in the Schism, the adverse Party was puffed up at his fall, and highly pleased with the disgrace which his miscarriage had branded his own Party with.

4. The giving Rules for the preserving of Order and Decency. There are no heats more quick and pernicious to the Church than those which derive their originall from differences about Order and the circumstances of Religion. Adiaphorous and lesser matters like smaller wood will kindle sooner than that which is more substantiall. It is well known, how violent the contest was betwixt the Eastern and Western Churches about a circumstance of time. The vulgar usually are most liberall in the expence of their zeal about what is circumstantiall. The fundamentall part of Religion lies deeper and more concealed from their observation.

Reason like a needle touched with the Magnet hath such a Position, that its aspect naturally is towards those Principles which are self-evident, and may be stiled the poles of Truth: and therefore so long as it is conversant about

about Propoſitions which have not an immediate connexion with them, it is apt to tremble and vary, and not to determine the ſame way in all. This variety in the thoughts of men when diſcloſed, produceth a diſlike betwixt them. He who diſſents from another, declares that he believes himſelf to be wiſer then he in that particular, and by conſequence attributes to him ſome degree of Folly, with which imputation none are well pleaſed. This diſlike being heated with paſſionate reflexions is preſently ſublimated, and boiled up into an enmity. An enmity upon the firſt occaſion will break out, and diſcloſe it ſelf in an open combuſtion. So that the Church muſt neceſſarily periſh, if ſhe be denied the priviledge which is eſſentiall to all Communities, namely a Power to preſerve her ſelf, and extinguiſh her flames by a prudent determination. The holy Scripture delivers the Eſſentials of Religion in particular Precepts, the circumſtantials and matters of Order in generall. The Churches determination upon ſome particulars in a congruity and conformity to the generall Command, is no addition to the Rule, but an extraction from it of what before was virtually contained in it. He makes no addition to a Maſs of gold, who beats it out into ſeverall pieces.

Neither is it prejudiciall to any liberty which thoſe who embrace the Doctrine of Chriſt are bound to maintain. The reſtraint is laid onely upon the outward Man, who is limited in reſpect of uſe, and not upon the Judgement which is the proper ſeat of Liberty.

Neither is our Duty to comply with it leſſened by any obligation to comport with the infirmity of the Weak. It is uſually ſaid, that the Load-ſtone will not draw in the preſence of a Diamond. When theſe two injunctions to obey Authority, and to yeeld to the weak, meet together, and both cannot be obſerved, the laſt which is certainly the leſs, muſt loſe its Energy, and according to the true intent of the Legiſlator, give place to the greater. Thoſe

who

who make the objection, usually conceive, that Governours through weakness, & want of insight into their Duty, make such determinations: and then if there be so much Charity left as to believe they are Christians, the weak will be offended as well by our not obeying, as by obeying. We standing equally poised betwixt both, are undoubtedly bound to prefer our weak Brother, who hath Authority on his side, before him who hath none.

5. The censuring those who neglect the Order which is agreed upon. The smalness of the thing commanded is no just Plea against the equity of a Censure in case of Disobedience. The publick interest being more valuable then any private concern; and the Authority of Governours being the genuine means conducing to its support, the justice of a penalty is not to be estimated solely by the intrinsick nature of the crime, but by the malevolent aspect it hath upon these two, and the degrees of inconvenience and damage which they receive from it. A lesser crime in some circumstances may be more detrimentall and less agreeable to the interest of the Community than a greater in other. And the less the thing is which is commanded and not submitted to, the greater is the contempt of that Authority which imposeth it. He which will break with another for a small matter, declares that his respects to him are not of the first magnitude.

As the Authority of a Governour is more signally owned by a conformity to his positive Commands, which have their sole dependence upon his will, then to his naturall, which are the dictates of universall Reason: (for in the first case it is singly and alone acknowledged: in the second it is so blended with the reason of the thing, that it is not easily perceived to which of them the agnition is directed) so likewise the Rule of opposition will justifie this conclusion, that it is more disowned by such a disobedience.

And now I have done with the Disease, which S. *Paul* and

and S. *Barnabas* did ſuppoſe their Brethren to be obnoxious too; and the Remedy, namely, an Apoſtolicall or Epiſcopall Authority expreſſed in Viſiting of them.

Nothing remains but to remind our ſelves of the Obligation we lie under, which is to be fervent in Prayer, diligent in our Watch, that we fall not into thoſe diſtempers, which the defects of Nature, the imperfection of our State, the policy of the Tempter are ready to betray us to: And that we demean our ſelves with ſuch due and becoming regards towards that Authority, which was given by the eternall Father to his Son; by the Son to his Apoſtles, by the Apoſtles to the Univerſall Church, by the Univerſall Church recommended to us; that in the great Day of Viſitation, when the Biſhop of our Souls ſhall appear with his glorious retinue to take an account of our deportment in this ſublunary State, we may be found not in the number of them who have deſpiſed Dominion, ſpoke evil of Dignities; but of thoſe whoſe Converſation hath been agreeable to the methods of Supernall Wiſdom, which is pure and peaceable, gentle and eaſie to be intreated. Which that all of us may be endued with; We beſeech thee, O Lord, to free our Minds from prejudice, our Affections from partiality, our Conſciences from errour: And bleſs us with all Spirituall Bleſſings in Chriſt: To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be eternally aſcribed all Honour and Glory.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

P. 9. lin. 3. read תורת. p. 10. lin. 4. read יהורות. p. 46. lin. 33. read *in a manner.*